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PROCEEDINGS OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATION IN JOURNALISM AND MASS COMMUNICATION (76TH, KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI, AUGUST 11-14, 1993). PART IX: MAGAZINES.

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Davids and Goliaths: The Economic Restructuring of the Postwar Magazine Industry, 1950-1970

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ABSTRACT (150 words)

Davids and Goliaths: The Economic Restructuring of the Postwar Magazine Industry, 1950-1970

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The focus of this paper is the major transformation in the U.S. consumer magazine industry that occurred during the 1960s: the shift a away from general-interest mass-market publications toward special-interest magazine aimed at specialized audiences. Using both proprietary company financial archival data and recent interviews with prominent publishing executives, this study examines both the economic and sociocultural factors with contributed to the transformation. It is argued that the decline of the mass magazine form was the result not only of competition from television and mismanagement by publishing companies, but also an inability by some publications to respond to fundamental sociocultural changes. Additionally, new publishing technology and a major shift in national advertising toward segmented marketing during the 1960s clearly favored the development of smaller, more specialized magazines.

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Davids and Goliaths: The Economic and Sociocultural Transformation of the Postwar Magazine Industry

Democratic nations...will habitually prefer the useful to the beautiful and...require that the beautiful should be useful.

— Alexis de Tocqueville[1]

During the 1960s, the American consumer magazine industry completed a major transformation: a shift away from general-interest mass-market publications toward more specialized magazines. By the early 1970s, four of the most celebrated mass magazines, *Life*, *Look*, *Saturday Evening Post*, and *Collier's*, had ceased publication, and in their place, another genre of magazine, the "special-interest" publication, began to flourish. Edited for specific, smaller audiences, addressing particular reader interests related to specific leisure activities, special-interest magazines with titles as diverse as the nation's newfound avocational pursuits (*Boating*, *Car and Driver*, *Cycle*, *Flying*, *Golf*, *Popular Electronics*, *Popular Photography*, *Skiing*, *Stereo Review*, *Tennis*, etc.) blossomed during the 1960s. Based both on the historical literature and recent interviews with prominent publishing executives, as well as proprietary company

financial data, the focus of this paper is an examination of the economic and sociocultural factors which contributed to this transformation.

It is generally agreed that three principal causes led to the demise of the traitional mass-market magazine: competition from television, mismanagement by publishing companies, and, as a less obvious but important undercurrent, an inability on the part of some of the publications to respond to fundamental sociocultural changes. "The late 1950s and early 1960s were a very difficult period for publishing executives, and many wondered if magazines were going to survive," recalled Robert Farley, executive vice president of Magazine Publishers of America (MPA). "Many general magazines had circulation and advertising strategies based on competition with television that, because TV could create an audience at no cost, destroyed their profit margins."[2]

According to Michael Hadley, former president of Times Mirror Magazines, "By the late 1950s, many of us suspected that TV was going to be the bigger and tougher kid on the block." The perception of broadcasting's comparative superiority in swaying mass audiences was certainly apparent by the 1960s, at least on the part of those with a pivotal influence on corporate advertising

decisions. "Television became the glamorous medium, and the advertising agencies fell in love with it at the expense of magazines," said Archa Knowlton, director of media planning from 1958 to 1978 for General Foods, a major consumer advertiser. "It all sounds somewhat irrational, but every night advertising people went home, watched TV, and loved it. Few went home and read *Ladies Home Journal*."[3]

It was widely believed that advertising on television worked differently from print ads. For mass marketers, TV held out a promise even the largest magazine could not match: the power to create a nation of buyers. "Everyone was watching the same thing," said Gilbert Maurer, executive vice president of the Hearst Corporation, "and there was an immediacy to its effect. Run a commercial on Sunday night, and on Monday you would be inundated with customers."[4] In addition, another reason for television's appeal as a national advertising medium was an early trade practice that remained in effect until the late 1960s: By agreement with the networks, major consumer-goods advertisers such as General Electric, Proctor & Gamble, Westinghouse, and Kraft Foods were allowed to produce their own TV shows, thus insuring their complete control over program content. "With shows like Danny Thomas, Andy Griffith,

and Lucille Ball, we virtually owned Monday nights from 8:30 to 10:00 during 1960s," recalled General Foods' Archa Knowlton.[5]

Rapid improvements in broadcasting technology and reception quality added to the magazines' troubles. Of particular import was the advent of color television in the early 1960s, for the new technology meant that TV could present vivid and attractive images which previously could only have been displayed in magazines. Once color commercials were possible, magazines as an advertising medium lost their last advantage.

It can be argued that, for many people in magazine publishing, television's sudden rise to prominence may have had psychological as well as economic effects. Magazines had been the primary national advertising medium since the late nineteenth century. Moreover, a select, highly visible group of mass magazines accounted for the vast majority of total circulation, with, by one estimate, twenty titles enjoying eighty percent of the circulation in the country. "After seventy-five years of dominance, we were suddenly being consigned to a lesser position by TV," said Donald Kummerfeld, president of the Magazine Publishers of America and former president of

Murdoch Magazines. "There was shock and panic as magazines' share of market declined. We didn't know where the bottom was."[6]

In retrospect, the principal miscalculation in the management strategy of many mass magazines in the 1950s and 1960s seems to have centered on an unrestrained belief in the wisdom of ever-increasing circulation. It is perhaps worth noting that, for many of the most prominent publications, this strategy was a widely held article of faith well before the rise of television. "In the years following World War II," said Hearst's Gilbert Maurer, "there was a tacit agreement between the large advertising agencies such as Batten, Barton, Durstine, and Osborn (BBD&O) and Young & Rubicam and publishers like Cowles and Curtis that, in placing its national advertising, American industry would buy all the 'reach' available." It was this business understanding, rather than any actual demand from the public, that may have driven much of the postwar circulation growth of magazines such as *Life*, *Look*, and the *Saturday Evening Post*.[7]

Initially, the sale of the advertising space to national manufacturers to promote the postwar expansion of the consumer economy proved enormously profitable to the publishers. With a surfeit of advertising pages, it

was possible for the magazines to "buy" circulation. "The ethos of the 1950s was that a good circulator can sell anything at the right price," Maurer explained. "Editors had little responsibility for their magazines' circulations, and in a palmy advertising climate, it is always easy to look good." The large advertising volumes allowed the mass magazines to make a profit from every additional unit of circulation, no matter what the additional readers cost them to acquire and renew.[8]

Few observers at the time, however, appreciated the degree to which many general-interest magazine publishers had leveraged themselves to obtain these large circulations. Like the junk-bond crisis of the late 1980s, maintaining the large circulations proved to be a huge obligation, one that would prove exceedingly difficult to meet--and still earn a profit--once television had arrived. "The wonderful money machine turned, in just a few years, into a loss-making machine. It became a tiger by the tail," a publishing official later noted. The reason for this was that the fundamental economics of publishing rewarded the raising of a magazine's circulation and severely penalized its lowering. In the calculus of matching circulation guarantees to advertising rates, a decrease in circulation not only meant lost circulation revenue;

publishers were also required to pay back a portion of the advertising income to compensate the advertisers for the smaller audience for their ads. It is likely, in the management mindset of the time, that reducing circulation was never considered anything other than the option of the very last resort.[9]

Indeed, with the emergence of TV, the mass magazines, enamored of their large circulations, elected to try to fight it on the new medium's own ground. "It was a clear case of mismanagement," said James Manousos, editor-in-chief of *Publishing Trends and Trendsetters*, an industry newsletter. "To increase their circulation, they gave away their magazines at a loss. Circulation salesmen would get a bonus of fifty cents for every new subscription, so many would just sit down with a phone book and send in the names. *Look*, for example, had a lot of that circulation at the end."[10]

Virtually giving their magazines away to maintain their circulations was not the only ploy the mass magazines used to compete with the ever-increasing audience offered to advertisers by television. Asserting that every copy of their publications was seen by an average of three or four readers, many also began to sell "total readership" rather than paid circulation. The basis of the claim was something called "syndicated

research." Conducted by third-party firms hired by the magazine companies, these commercial surveys had as an unspoken but obvious objective the inflation magazine readership numbers by including calculations for "pass-along" circulation.[11]

Also called "total-audience research," these syndicated studies actually originated in the early 1950s; one of the first survey firms involved was the A.C. Nielsen Company, which would later concentrate on serving the research needs of the television industry. By the 1960s, however, the studies that the large publishers needed to support claims of pass-along readership were being supplied by more sympathetic research firms such as W.R. Simmons Company and MRI, Inc. The magazines were not disappointed with the results provided. Though the *Saturday Evening Post*'s paid circulation in the mid-1960s was approximately 6 million, it could claim a total audience, based on the pass-along surveys, of some 14 million readers. *Look*'s 8 million circulation reportedly reached 18 million readers, while *Life*'s 7 million copies were, the studies asserted, read by 21 million people.[12] Despite these inflated claims, the mass-circulation magazines clearly failed to meet the challenge of television's growing dominance as the mass advertising medium of choice. During the 1960s, TV's

share of the national advertising expenditures more than doubled, from $1.5 billion to over $3.5 billion. In contrast, magazine advertising revenues were relatively flat during the same period, rising from under $1 billion to $1.2 billion.[13]

As many of the mass magazine's financial troubles worsened during the 1960s, a measure of recklessness may have tainted their management decision-making. There is little evidence to suggest, however, that the prevailing gospel of ever-increasing circulations was ever seriously questioned. In 1969, for example, *Look*'s circulation briefly overtook that of *Life*. To celebrate its accomplishment, *Look* placed a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times*; the headline read: "*Look* is bigger than *Life*." Stung by the taunt and eager to regain its former status, *Life* quickly bought the subscriber list of the *Saturday Evening Post* when it folded later that year. "This may have been the biggest mistake in the latter part of *Life*'s existence," a publishing executive remarked later. "No one should have touched that subscriber list." Within a year, it was clear that the former *Post* readers were not renewing their subscriptions to *Life*, so the magazine had to spend *more* money to find *new* readers to maintain its enlarged rate base.[14]

As the mass magazines continued to increase their circulations by any means possible in an attempt to compete with television, they also raised the prices they charged their advertisers. "After a while, the advertisers began to look more closely at what was going on," recalled one industry observer, "and they were not pleased." Before long, the most serious of consequences became apparent: The number of advertising pages in the mass magazines suffered a marked decline. The annual total of advertising pages carried in *Life* Magazine, for example, decreased by almost fifty percent during the 1960s.[15]

Some national advertisers were sympathetic to the magazines' plight. Concerned about the geometric increases in broadcast advertising at the expense of print in the late 1960s, General Foods conducted an extensive marketing study to compare the relative merits of magazines and television as advertising vehicles; the test showed that the two media were equally effective in selling products. As a result, General Foods, as well as Proctor & Gamble and a number of other large consumer advertisers, began to require that their agencies include magazines in all proposed advertising schedules. "We

wanted," said General Foods' Archa Knowlton, "to allow magazines to compete with this monster that was devouring them."[16]

The fundamental problem, however, of artificially inflated circulations remained. "We were concerned about the large magazines, particularly how they were maintaining their circulations," remembers Knowlton. "We'd look at the audited circulation reports and see newsstand sales falling, increases in discounted subscriptions, and a lot of arrears. We could see what they were doing to themselves." Perhaps by that time it was far too late for most mass magazine executives to change course. "When we'd bring up our concerns with them, they'd say, 'You stick to your business and we'll stick to ours.'"[17]

Beyond the evident economic and management considerations, it can also be argued that much of the trouble experienced by many mass-market magazines in the 1960s may have been due, in the words of the MPA's Robert Farley, to "their editorial failure to keep up with the changes in American society in the 1960s." According to social researchers, it was a decade of "new rules," and the social and cultural values inherent in, for example,

a Norman Rockwell *Post* cover, *Liberty*'s "reading times," or another starlet pictorial in *Life* seemed clearly out of step with the times.[18]

As reflectors and shapers of the widespread social consensus that defined postwar America until 1960, the mass-market magazines had great success with editorial personas that underscored the conformity of the age. They could indeed serve as "the best periodical measures of the concerns, the tastes, and the standards of an era," wrote the historian Theodore Greene. "In the 1950s, everyone wanted to wear the same clothes, drive the same car, live in the same house. Uniformity was not a bad thing," said one industry observer. "In fact, limited choice was seen as the key to American efficiency, and mass marketing, not the consumer, was king back then."[19]

In the view of some publishing executives, the editorial weaknesses of the mass magazines may have been suggested by a particular item in their circulation reports. (See Appendix A, Table 1.) "As a magazine publisher, one way to gauge how well you are serving your readers' interests is single-copy sales on newsstands," said Gilbert Maurer of Hearst. "I think it is revealing that the paid circulations of *Life*, *Look*, and the *Saturday Evening Post*, for example, all had less than

five percent newsstand sales. During their circulation run-ups in the 1960s, they clearly lost sight of what the American public wanted to read."[20]

The Rise of the Specialized Magazine

As many of the mass-circulation publications suffered, magazines addressing the specific interests of specific readers prospered. Between 1955 and 1965, the circulations of a wide variety of more targeted publications enjoyed significant growth. For instance, the readership of *Boy's Life* and *Sports Illustrated* doubled during this period, *Mechanix Illustrated* and *Scientific American* almost tripled in size, and the circulation of *Playboy*, certainly a special case, increased tenfold.[21]

A number of factors may have contributed to the process of specialization in U.S. magazines during the 1960s. In economic terms, major advances in printing technology that not only lowered costs but changed the economies of scale were critically important. The computerization of both typesetting and color-separation processes, as well as the advent of compact, high-quality offset presses, resulted in reduced per-copy manufacturing costs. Large print runs were no longer necessary, and small circulation magazines suddenly

became more profitable. (See Appendix A, Table 2.) "With production costs falling," said James Manousos of *Publishing Trends*, "it became possible to produce smaller magazines for specialized audiences—which was a more 'natural' way to distribute information. This change in the economics has been a normal development in every communications medium."[22]

In his thoughtful book, *The Power to Inform*, the media critic Jean-Louis Servan-Schreiber suggested a variety of social changes that influenced the trend toward specialized diversity in magazines. A general increase in social tolerance may have allowed the greater assertion of new freedoms and tastes. This, along with the postwar rise in levels of education which helped to create a multiplicity of personal interests, produced new, smaller social groupings which smaller, more specialized magazines could effectively address. Increased affluence, moreover, made even smaller potential magazine markets financially feasible as business propositions, particularly those related to the rising interest in leisure activities.[23]

Despite the troubles of many large-circulation magazines, the total number of periodicals rose in the 1960s from 8,422 to 9,573 titles, and personal expenditures on periodicals increased from $2.1 billion to $3.4

billion. (See Appendix A, Tables 3-5.) As a result, a wide assortment of magazines targeted at specific subjects flourished. In some cases, established magazine genres particularly benefited; both religious periodicals of all denominations and "handyman" magazines for the do-it-yourselfer proliferated. In others, whole new categories of special-interest magazines emerged. These included a new breed of city/regional magazine, largely modeled on Clay Felker's *New York* (founded in 1967 as an insert in the *World Journal Tribune*, a newspaper) which was both journalistically aspiring and service-oriented, and a wide variety of psychological awareness and self-improvement magazines such as *Psychology Today* (1966).[24]

Particularly notable was the success enjoyed by magazines focused on active leisure pursuits. Described by one observer as a "revolutionary boom," participatory sports burgeoned during the 1960s. Personal expenditures on recreation more than doubled during the decade, increasing from $18.3 billion to $40.7 billion. Similarly, the number of books published about sports and recreation also doubled (from 233 titles in 1960 to 583 in 1970).[25]

At least two other factors favored the special-interest magazine publishers of the 1960s. First, a study

examining the period from 1946 to 1977 suggested that, although the loyalty of readers to newspapers had been declining since the 1950s, magazine readership, especially among the young, continued to climb steadily during the period, despite the popularity of television. (See Appendix A, Table 6.) Second, rather than compete with the time individuals spent reading, it appeared that leisure activities merely whetted the appetite of many for more printed information about their avocational pursuits. (See Appendix A, Table 7.) The more compelling their interest, the more likely they were to want to read more about it.[26]

As a result, by the early 1960s, a number of newspaper and broadcasting companies saw the potential in special-interest magazine publishing. The Hearst Corporation set the precedent, and was soon followed by Times Mirror, CBS, the New York Times, and ABC. Some started new magazines; others bought existing titles. "This 'multimedia-ization' dramatically changed special-interest publishing, transforming what had been a number of small separate cottage industries into big businesses," said Michael Hadley, former president of Times Mirror Magazines. "We were up against companies

such as Ziff-Davis and Petersen, which were dedicated solely to special-interest magazine publishing, and the competition was intense."[27]

The rewards for success in the competition were considerable. The Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, for example, concentrated its efforts on consumer magazines aimed at aviation, automotive, boating, photography, and skiing enthusiasts. Its titles, each the dominant entry in its category, included *Flying*, *Car and Driver*, *Boating*, *Popular Photography*, and *Skiing*, as well as *Cycle*, *Popular Electronics*, and *Stereo Review*. During the decade of the 1960s, the circulation of its magazines grew by an annual average of almost ten percent, while its gross revenues more than doubled and its profits increased more than fifteen times.[28] (See Appendix A, Tables 8-11.)

Similar gains were realized by other publishers who chose to apply themselves to the leisure-oriented special-interest magazine genre: Hearst, Times Mirror, Petersen, the New York Times Company, and both ABC's and CBS's magazine subsidiaries. In contrast, the companies that published three of the four most celebrated postwar general-interest publications, *Look*, the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Collier's*, were soon out of the consumer magazine business altogether.[29]

In an industry as diverse and decentralized as magazine publishing, however, it would not be accurate to suggest that these two trends of the 1960s, the precipitous decline of the large general-interest publication and the sudden rise of the leisure-active specialized magazine, were historical absolutes. Though often considered in a class by itself, *Reader's Digest* was certainly a mass-audience publication, and during the 1960s its U.S. circulation grew from 13 million to almost 18 million.[30] Similarly, during this period a number of other specialized magazine genres unrelated to recreational pursuits—the newsweeklies, the city/regional magazines, business and financial publications, and women's magazines covering home and fashion, to name a few—also thrived. Nevertheless, the proliferation and sustained success of what had previously been called, somewhat derisively, the "hobby books" were two of the significant markers of the era.[31]

It is also worth noting that leisure-active publications as a genre had existed long before the 1960s. One of the magazine categories with the longest history, outdoor or "sporting" journals, had blossomed shortly after the Civil War. By the turn of the century there were more than such fifty magazines, most of which

were gentlemen's journals celebrating "the sporting life" and devoted to hunting, fishing, horse racing, and other outdoor activities.[32]

Some wielded significant social and political influence in their day. *Forest and Stream*, for example, established in 1873, was the force behind the founding of the Audubon Society, while *Appalachia*, established three years later, was instrumental in the passage of the Congressional act that created the national forests. During the 1930s, however, many of these journals declined, the result of the Great Depression's hardships and changing social tastes, and only three major titles, *Field & Stream*, *Outdoor Life*, and *Sports Afield*, were in a position to benefit in the larger postwar boom in recreation-centered special-interest magazines.[33]

A Marketing Revolution

One can argue that two requirements were (and to this day continue to be) essential for long-term success in magazine publishing: first, specific information in a specific form that could be expected to appeal to a definable segment of readers, and second, a group of manufacturers or distributors with the means and willingness to advertise their products and services to those readers. One of the most important aspects is the

preceived level of reader commitment to a magazine's subject. "The key is that the special-interest publications demand high reader involvement--subscribers are participants in the subject being written about," wrote the media scholar Benjamin Compaine. "Thus the special-interest magazine is selling a readership of unquestionable homogeneity... while providing a waiting audience with sought-after information that often results in intense cover-to-cover reading of editorial and advertising content alike."[34]

"Some companies like Ziff-Davis were very successful in developing specialized magazines," said James Manousos. "It was good business because, with 'generic' advertisers so well defined, one could get in for less. And with so little 'wasted' circ, you could charge your advertisers more." Because they dealt with a single product or activity that was fundamental not only to the editorial material but also to the bulk of advertising, specialized magazines could deliver a specific, highly defined audience to their advertisers.[35]

Most successful special-interest magazines relied on a fairly simple editorial formula that supported both these requirements. The basic tenets concerning editorial content included: an unremitting focus on nonfiction rather than fiction; product rather than "people"

articles; a participatory, hands-on-tutorial rather than vicarious approach to all subjects; and a high degree of technical complexity. More important perhaps than simply serving the informational needs of some readers, all of this was designed to attract the specific kinds of deeply committed readers, "heavy users" in the parlance of publishing, whom potential advertisers would find attractive.[36]

"People had long read what were once called 'fan' publications, but in the 1960s it became clear that people who read our special-interest magazines wanted to buy things," recalled one magazine executive. "We were always amazed by our purchasing studies. Our readers accounted for seventy percent of all high-quality, high-priced products sold, roughly $1000 a year. So for advertisers, the people they wanted to reach with their ads selected themselves by reading our magazines."[37]

An interesting aspect of this equation was the practice of subtly discouraging less-committed readers unattractive to advertisers. "We scared away the readers we didn't want by intimidating them," said William Ziff, chairman of Ziff-Davis Publishing. "They either weren't competent to read it technically, or they weren't competent to read it in terms of ideational or vocabulary complexity." As an added benefit, this exclusionary

approach lowered the companies' circulation promotion costs. "Our attitude was that we didn't want everyone to subscribe. So we saved our money, and instead simply said: 'Here it is. If you don't already know about it, you're not going to subscribe anyway.'"[38]

Fortuitously, the ability of special-interest magazines to deliver finely targeted, high-consuming audiences to advertisers coincided with two major transformations in consumer marketing. First, many postwar brands of consumer goods had become well established by 1960. As a result, the goal of much national advertising began to shift from image creation and brand recognition to more closely fought contests of market share. One implication of this was that advertising had to appeal to more knowledgeable customers than in the immediate postwar years. To accomplish this, many ads began to provide more information, rather than simply selling "image."

At the same time, advances in computer technology, as well as reductions in its price, led to a second trend: the evolution of proprietary research in market segmentation by lifestyle, attitudes, and behavior. "It is important to remember that media planning before about 1960 was an emotional thing," recalled one media planner. "Ads in *Life* were bought and sold over drinks at the

Stork Club in those days. People at the advertising agencies would decide what they wanted to do, and then simply build a rationale for it."[39]

At first, the magazines themselves seemed to understand best targeted marketing; this was, after all, one of the few advantages they had over television. "The media were most influential in teaching advertisers how to do things differently," James Manousos recalled. "They taught the advertising world how to advertise." As a result of these efforts by the special-interest publishers, specificity of audiences came to be accepted by the ad agencies, and soon the driving force was the large national advertising agencies such as J. Walter Thompson, Young & Rubicam, and Ogilvy & Mather. "Few clients back then had their own research departments," one analyst remembered, "so the agencies competed with each other on the basis of the uniqueness of the research they could offer."[40]

The result was a marketing revolution: from inventing a product and then finding customers for it to first studying one's customers and then making what they wanted. Early attempts at targeted marketing were crude. Gender was the first differentiation, because certain advertisers decided they primarily wanted to reach women. Soon new research techniques were developed to study not

just the demographics of audiences, but their psychographics as well. Employing only the gross demographic categories, one could presume that, for example, Phyllis Schafly and Gloria Steinem were similar customers. Or that Grace Slick of Jefferson Airplane and Tricia Nixon Cox, or perhaps Anita Bryant and Renee Richards, could be reached with the same advertisement. By using more revealing variables such as education level, residential zip code, and occupational status, however, customer characteristics could be far more sharply defined.[41]

Some of the large consumer-goods companies embraced targeted marketing with a passion. "We developed our own computerized media planning system in 1961, one of the first in the industry," recalled Archa Knowlton of General Foods. "It allowed us to match the demographics of magazines and TV shows by age, income, marital status, and geography with the target audience for specific products." The General Foods software also assigned a 'persuasion value' to each specific medium for each product; for example, a Jello ad would be more effective in a culinary magazine than in a men's magazine. "Remember, this was the early 1960s. It took our computer fifty hours of processing to produce the printout. It was the damndest thing you ever saw."[42]

The rise of narrowly focused marketing clearly favored the position of special-interest magazines in the 1960s as advertising vehicles. Of particular importance was their appeal to upscale males, a market segment that national advertisers had traditionally found difficult to reach. As a result, the magazines were able to raise dramatically their advertising rates, in some cases more than tripling them during the course of the decade.[43] (See Appendix A, Tables 8-11.)

The price of advertising is usually expressed in terms of "cost per thousand" (cpm) readers or viewers. For magazines, the cost is that of a black-and-white advertisement, one full page in size; for television, a thirty-second commercial. At the beginning of the 1960s, the cpm's of the special-interest magazines, though three times larger than network TV's, were still below those of newsmagazines such as *Time* and *Newsweek*. By the end of the decade, their cpm advertising rates were twice those of the newsweeklies, and eight times the size of television's.[44] "If one understands the difference between incremental and average costs of production," one special-interest magazine official remarked with remembered satisfaction, "one can perhaps appreciate what that did for our profitability."[45]

By the end of the 1960s, the transformation of the consumer magazine industry was virtually complete. Victims of television's ascendancy and their own mismanagement, many mass-audience magazines had failed. In their place, a wide variety of specialized magazines were flourishing. The evolution of both targeted marketing techniques by major advertisers and of publishing technology contributed to their development, and many magazine publishers eagerly established new and expanded existing special-interest titles, particularly those concerned with active leisure activities.

In a broader sense, however, the success of the special-interest magazines in the 1960s may also have been due to concurrent sociocultural change. Many Americans, it seemed, wanted to pursue new means of self-expression, to devote themselves to new, more individualistic interests, perhaps to reinvent themselves. This was the need that many of the specialized magazines served, and it was this yearning that in large part determined the future character of the American consumer magazine industry.

1. NOTES

1. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, ed. Richard D. Heffner (New York: New American Library, 1956), 169.

2. P. Robert Farley, interview by author, 3 December 1991, New York. For an examination of the business prospects of many of the large mass-market magazines, see also Antoon J. van Zuilen, *The Life Cycle of Magazines: A Historical Study of the Decline and Fall of the General Interest Mass Audience Magazine in the United States During the Period 1946-1972* (Uithoorn, The Netherlands: Graduate Press, 1977); and Peter Bart, "Giants On Uneasy Footing," *Columbia Journalism Review* 1 (Spring 1962): 32-33.

3. J. Michael Hadley, interview by author, 23 December 1991, New York; Archa Knowlton, interview by author, 18 December 1991, New York. See also Jacob Jacoby and Wayne D. Hoyer, *The Comprehension and Miscomprehension of Print Communication: An Investigation of Mass Media Magazines* (New York: Advertising Education Foundation, 1987) and C.D. Urban, "Correlates of Magazine Readership," *Journal of Advertising Research* 20.4 (August 1980): 73-84.

4. Gilbert C. Maurer, interview by author, 23 December 1991, New York.

5. Knowlton interview.

6. Donald D. Kummerfeld, interview by author, 23 December 1991, New York. See also Leo Bogart, "Magazines Since the Rise of Television," *Journalism Quarterly* 33 (Spring 1956): 153-166.

7. Maurer interview.

8. See R. Krishnan and L.C. Soley, "Controlling Magazine Circulation," *Journal of Advertising Research* 27.4 (August/September 1987): 17-23.

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11. Kummerfeld interview. See also S.C. McDonald, "Procedure for the Use of Syndicated Audience Research to Develop Synthetic Cohorts for Historical Media Analysis," *Journal of the Market Research Society* 28.2 (April 1988): 175-188.

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16. Knowlton interview. See also W.M. Towers, "Uses and Gratifications of Magazine Readers: A Cross-Media Comparison," *Mass Comm Review* 13.1 (1986): 44-51; and Alan D. Fletcher and Paul D. Winn, "An Intermagazine Analysis of Factors in Advertising Readership," *Journalism Quarterly* 51.3 (Autumn 1974): 425-430.

17. Knowlton interview. See also Paul H. Chook, "A Continuity Study of Magazine Environment, Frequency, and Advertising Performance," *Journal of Advertising Research* 25.4 (August/September 1985): 23-33.

18. Farley interview. See also Daniel Yankelovich, *New Rules: Searching for Fulfillment in a World Turned Upside Down* (New York: Random House, 1981). Founded in 1924, *Liberty*, "A Weekly for Everybody," had more than 2.5 million subscribers shortly after World War II. One of its standard features was an assumed reading time (e.g. "5 Minutes 5 Seconds") posted at the beginning of each article. The magazine ceased publication in the early 1950s; see John W. Tebbel and Mary Ellen Zuckerman, *The Magazine in America, 1741-1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 193.

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28. William Phillips, interview by author, 15 March 1991, New York. Note: Permission from the Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, a closely held private firm, to review company financial operating statements from this historical period is gratefully acknowledged.

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30. For interesting insights into the editorial formula for the *Reader's Digest* success, see R.F. Smith, and L. Decker-Amos, "Of Lasting Interest? A Study of Change in the Content of the *Reader's Digest*," *Journalism Quarterly* 62.1 (Spring 1985): 127-131.

31. See Association of National Advertisers, *Magazine Circulation*, 22-33, 68-193.

32. Frank Luther Mott, *A History of American Magazines* (vol. 3; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938), 210-211.

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34. Benjamin M. Compaine, "The Magazine Industry: Developing the Special-Interest Audience," *Journal of Communication* 30.2 (Spring 1980): 103.

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36. Geri Brin, "How Special Interest Publications Capture Specialized Audiences," *Magazine Age* (September 1980): 64-69.

37. Furman Hebb, interview by author, 1 February 1991, New York.

38. William Ziff, interview by author, 8 February 1991, Manalapan, FL, 5 March 1991 and 12 March 1991, New York. From a management perspective, the issue of "ideational and vocabulary complexity" was an engaging one. "We always told our editors," Ziff recalled, "to write up to their audiences, which is to say that it was okay to be difficult to read if it wasn't obscurantism, that they were talking in a sophisticated way to knowledgeable people, that they didn't have to reduce things. But that always 'product' was the key. Product! Tutorial! Close analysis! The colorful writing was fun, part of the panache, but it was only window-dressing."

39. Knowlton interview.

40. Manousos interview; Paul Chook, interview by author, 21 December 1990, New York.

41. John O'Toole, interview by author, 7 January 1992, New York. See John E. O'Toole, *The Trouble with Advertising: A View from the Inside* (2nd ed.; New York: Times Books, 1985), 81-83.

42. Knowlton interview.

43. See H.M. Cannon and D.L. Williams, "Toward A Hierarchical Taxonomy of Magazine Readership," *Journal of Advertising* 17.2 (1988): 15-25. See also David G. Pugh, "History as an Expedient Accommodation: The Manliness Ethos in Modern America," *Journal of American Culture* 3 (Spring 1980): 53-68; and G.V. Skelly and W.J. Lundstrom, "Male Sex Roles in Magazine Advertising, 1959-1979," *Journal of Communication* 31.4 (Fall 1981): 47-52.

44. For comparison, network television's current (1992) cpm is below five dollars, a figure which, not coincidentally, is also the cpm of *TV Guide*. Women's "service" magazines such *Better Homes & Garden* and *Ladies Home Journal* have cpm's below fifteen dollars, while the newsweeklies such as *Time* and *Newsweek* cluster around twenty dollars. Most special-interest magazines now have cpm's over forty dollars. Stanley R. Greenfield, interview by author, 19 December 1990, New York.

45. Hebb interview.

APPENDIX A: TABLES

Table 1: U.S. Consumer Magazine Subscription and Single-Copy Circulation, 1955-1970

Year	Subscription Circulation (percent)	Single-Copy Circulation (percent)
1955	60.5%	39.5%
1960	67.3	32.7
1965	69.1	30.9
1970	71.0	29.0
Relative percentage increase (decrease):		
1955-1960	11.2%	(17.2%)
1960-1965	2.7	(5.5)
1965-1970	2.7	(6.1)

Source: Benjamin M. Compaine, *The Business of Consumer Magazines* (White Plains, NY: Knowledge Industry Publications, 1982), 24.

Discussion: Despite the importance placed by some publishers on single-copy sales as an indicator of editorial "vitality," it is clear that the general trend of the period favored the growth of subscription circulation. The rise of the suburbs and a decrease in the number of urban newsstands certainly played a role in this shift in magazine circulation patterns.

Table 2: U.S. Consumer Magazine Circulation, 1960-1970

Year	Number of ABC-Audited Magazines	Aggregate Circulation Per Issue (millions)	Average Circulation Per Issue (thousands)
1960	545	245.0	450
1965	768	291.9	380
1970	1009	307.0	304
Percentage increase (decrease):			
1960-1965	40.7%	19.1%	(15.6%)
1965-1970	31.4	5.2	(20.0)

Source: Benjamin M. Compaine, *The Business of Consumer Magazines* (White Plains, NY: Knowledge Industry Publications, 1982), 9.

Discussion: The 1960s were a time of magazine proliferation. Although both the number of Audit Bureau of Circulation-audited consumer magazines and their aggregate circulations increased, the average circulation size of magazines fell from 450,000 readers per issue to 304,000, a decrease over the decade of more than thirty percent. More magazines were being published, but they were aimed at smaller audiences.

Table 3: U.S. Periodical Publishing, 1950-1970

Year	Number of Periodicals	Personal Expenditures on Periodicals (billions)
1950	6960	1.49
1960	8422	2.19
1970	9573	3.90
Percentage increase:		
1950-1960	21.0%	47.0%
1960-1970	13.7	78.1

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1975); U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1950-1980).

Tables

Table 4: Comparison of GNP to Value of Periodical Industry Shipments, 1960-1975

Year	U.S. GNP (billions)	Industry Value (billions)	Industry Portion of GNP (percent)
1960	$ 506.0	$ 2.1	0.0041%
1965	688.1	2.6	0.0038
1970	982.4	3.2	0.0033
1975	1528.8	4.4	0.0029

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, *U.S. Industrial Outlook* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965, 1971, 1976).

Table 5: U.S. Periodical Publishing Industry, 1958-1977

Year	Number of Companies	Industry Value (billions)	Value Share of 8 Largest Companies (percent)
1958	2246	$ 1.7	41%
1967	2430	3.1	37
1977	2860	6.1	35

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, *Census of Manufacturers* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1977).

Discussion: Between 1950 and 1970, the U.S. periodical industry as a whole prospered. The total number of periodicals increased by more than a third, while personal expenditures for periodicals more than doubled (Table 3). But despite the periodical industry's growth during the 1960s and early 1970s, its relative share of the GNP declined (Table 4). And as the number of publishing companies and their revenues increased, industry concentration decreased slightly (Table 5).

Table 6: Magazine Readership by Age, 1957-1976

Age	1957 Survey (percent)[a]	1966 Survey (percent)	1976 Survey (percent)
20-29	29%	24%	30%
30-39	25	21	28
40-49	25	22	24
50-59	25	27	26
60+	27	27	27
Overall	27	25	28

[a] Percentage of respondents to national surveys indicating that they read a magazine "yesterday."

Source: John P. Robinson, "The Changing Reading Habits of the American Public," *Journal of Communication* 30.1 (Winter 1980): 147.

Discussion: It is apparent that the advent of television had no lasting effect on the appeal of magazines. Despite a small decline in overall magazine readership in the 1960s, by the mid-1970s it had surpassed the level it had attained prior to the dominance of TV. Perhaps largely due to a proliferation of special-interest titles, magazines also regained the loyalty of younger readers.

Table 7: Comparison of Leisure Activities and Magazine Readership

Activity	Total Sample (percent)	Read Magazines (percent)	Read Books & Magazines (percent)
Gardening	41%	38%	43%
Outdoors activit. (e.g. camping)	35	32	38
Individual sports (e.g. golf)	33	24	42
Physical fitness (e.g bicycling)	33	24	39

Source: George F. McEvoy and Cynthia S. Vincent, "Who Reads and Why?" *Journal of Communication* 30.1 (Winter 1980): 138.

Discussion: The fear on the part of some industry observers that an increased interest in recreation might lower Americans' appetite for reading proved unfounded. Indeed, for magazine publishers, there was a reassuringly high correlation between the pursuit of leisure activities and magazine readership.

Table 8: *Boating* Magazine, Economic Data, 1963-1970

	1963	1966	1970
Total Advertising Pages	720	680	963
Page Rate, 1xB&W ($)	$1695	1780	2010
Circulation (000s)	188	193	204
Operating Statements ($000):			
Advertising Income	1051	1084	1643
Circulation Income	347	393	573
Subscription Income	198	227	359
Single-copy Income	149	166	214
Other Income	0	0	20
Total Income	1398	1484	2236
Operating Profit	152	126	435

Source: William Phillips, interview by author, 15 March 1991, New York.

Table 9: *Car and Driver* Magazine, Economic Data, 1963-1970

	1963	1966	1970
Total Advertising Pages	398	477	533
Page Rate, 1xB&W ($)	$1585	3150	6215
Circulation (000s)	228	303	577
Operating Statements ($000):			
Advertising Income	817	1295	1947
Circulation Income	665	967	1238
Subscription Income	379	546	885
Single-copy Income	286	421	353
Other Income	0	61	38
Total Income	1482	2323	3223
Operating Profit	325	677	835

Source: William Phillips, interview by author, 15 March 1991, New York.

Table 10: *Flying* Magazine, Economic Data, 1963-1970

	1963	1966	1970
Total Advertising Pages	570	780	705
Page Rate, 1xB&W ($)	$1755	2299	3655
Circulation (000s)	220	257	347
Operating Statements ($000):			
Advertising Income	1051	1084	1643
Circulation Income	347	393	573
Subscription Income	198	227	359
Single-copy Income	149	166	214
Other Income	0	0	20
Total Income	1398	1484	2236
Operating Profit	152	126	435

Source: William Phillips, interview by author, 15 March 1991, New York.

Table 11: *Popular Photography* Magazine, Economic Data, 1963-1970

	1963	1966	1970
Total Advertising Pages	907	1103	1200
Page Rate, 1xB&W ($)	$3853	4315	6797
Circulation (000s)	397	417	535
Operating Statements ($000):			
Advertising Income	1888	2456	3647
Circulation Income	925	1040	1276
Subscription Income	473	554	637
Single-copy Income	452	486	639
Other Income	0	7	75
Total Income	2813	3503	4998
Operating Profit	496	843	1506

Source: William Phillips, interview by author, 15 March 1991, New York.

Discussion: A review of historical economic data from four representative special-interest magazines suggests the bases of their financial success during the 1960s. *Boating* (Table 8), *Car and Driver* (Table 9), *Flying*, (Table 10), and *Popular Photography* (Table 11) all enjoyed increases in total advertising pages sold, the rates charged for advertising, and total circulation. As a result, revenues from both advertising and circulation increased, yielding significant profit growth.

As noted in the text, the attractiveness to potential advertisers of the audiences of the special-interest magazines allowed the magazines to effect substantial annual increases in their advertising rates. Due to this evident "elasticity" in advertising rates, advertising revenues typically represented a larger share of total income than circulation revenues.

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Abstract:

The Global Economy As Magazine News Story: A Pilot Study in the Framing of News

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The amount of coverage in weekly U.S. news magazines about the economies of selected industrialized countries is compared to their economic performance as measured by the growth in their gross domestic products. The amount of coverage is also correlated to their balance of trade statistics with the United States. Finally, a content analysis of the coverage of the British and French economies was conducted. The results show that coverage of the "emerging global economy" has been framed primarily as a trade story and coverage may be skewed by specifically American assumptions.

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Introduction: The Emergence of the Global Economy

By 1992, the notion that the United States was competing in a global economy was widely accepted. In the presidential campaign that year, George Bush defended the economic performance of his presidency, in part, by noting that the United States had been effected by a world wide economic slowdown and that the U.S. economy was performing better than many of its industrial competitors. Furthermore, he often argued that the United States was poised to lead the world into economic recovery.

Democratic nominee Bill Clinton also often cast his economic proposals as a way to prepare America for the global economy of the twenty first century, arguing that national security depended on economic security. For his part, independent candidate Ross Perot opined that the U.S. could not survive as a military superpower if it was no longer an economic superpower.

The presidential contenders' rhetoric did not fall on uncomprehending ears. Information about the performance of foreign economies is available in America. With the launching of all business television networks such as CNBC, reporting on the performance of overseas stock markets, the relative strength of different currencies and other foreign economic news became a routine daily occurrence. Every Monday, the performance of foreign economies is recapped in a chart in the business section of the New York Times.

America's role in the global economy has been a major story in many media. In a striking example, in October, 1992 Business Week published a special issue titled "Reinventing America." In it, the magazine noted that,

> ...rising prosperity seems to be eluding America, once the economic leader of the world. The Japanese and Germans are bringing technological advances to the market faster and more cheaply. The country that invented mass production can no longer compete for routine manufacturing jobs against such low wage countries as Taiwan and Mexico. Imports seem to have permanently staked out a big share of the U.S. market...The U.S. is on its way to ceding the future to its competitors...buffeted by global competition...business has grown wary of investing in the future.[1]

The article goes on to show that while U.S. labor costs, factory productivity and cost of capital were competitive with Germany's and Japan's, U.S. investment lagged. In sum, the U.S. economy had to be revamped to meet the pressures from a global economy. The article's author, opined "...free market forces are already transforming the U.S. economy."[2] Clearly, understanding and confronting the "global economy," at least in the view of the editors of Business Week was vital to America's future. How do magazines participate in that process?

Public Discourse and Framing of the News

As James Carey recently pointed out, although the canons of journalism "originate in and flow from the relationship of the press to the public...Rarely--at least in journalistic circles--is it seriously debated whether the press does inform the public, or the nature of the public."[3] Carey proposes a theory of "public,"--a theory drawing on Robert Parks and other earlier thinkers--as a society of strangers who could gather to discuss news within specific contexts and adhering to certain conventions. The term public, he contended, represented a mode of discourse as well as a location, sphere or sector of society in which the discourse was conducted. The mandate of the press was to furnish material for argument.

At the same time, news and news stories represent a social construction. News stories are specifically situated accounts of the world and those accounts serve to build, shape and alter the mental pictures the people active in both the public and private

sectors of society hold.[4] The way news stories are constructed and told; what "facts" from the "real world" are included in news accounts, what triggers the reporting of a specific story itself, and the context within which stories are placed contribute to the mental constructions that underscore public discourse.

These issues are generally discussed in several ways. Perhaps the weakest way in which how news enters and girds public discourse is the debate about what is news--why specific events or developments are deemed worthy of reporting and why. Journalism textbooks generally give a brief run down of characteristics of news--timeliness, proximity, impact, novelty, human interest, etc.--which fail to adequate explain the news selection that takes place every day in newspapers and television newscasts and every week in news magazines and then leave it at that.[5]

For their part, journalists do not want to be bothered by arid debates about what is news; they know news, they argue, when they see it.[6] Indeed, recognizing news when they see it is the cornerstone of a journalists professionalism. Nevertheless, despite the lack of a rigorous discussion of what constitutes news within the professional news community, there is a commonly shared notion that media content in some way reflects or reports a social reality.[7]

A second, perhaps less fundamental but more vigorous analysis of the social construction of news accounts which enter into public discourse, is Gitlin's notion of framing the news. Gitlin argues that journalists frame news based on assumptions about what is salient and what is not according to notions consistent with a dominant--or hegemonic--vision of society. News routines, to some degree, serve to reinforce a specific vision of the way the world works.[8]

In terms of international news, the operative news frames of American media and the assumptions underlying U.S. news routines, give news a specifically American orientation. The implication is that public discourse in the United States about international issues can vary dramatically from the public discourse in other countries because the way in which the news has been framed varies dramatically.[9]

This perspective is consistent with two other independent ways of assessing media performance and the social role of the media. First, it conforms to the "priming" aspects

of the agenda setting function of news. Through priming, the media establishes the criteria through which events and people are to be judged; it shapes the judgements of readers and viewers.[10] Secondly, there is a great deal of overlap between the notion of "framing the news" and the observation that it is the role of a media which is differentiated from other social institutions to normalize chaotic events by placing them within understandable and expected patterns. Ultimately, the normalizing of events is a function of the media in maintain social stability.[11]

Consequently, the framing and shaping of news stories, as well as the determination of "what is news" can play a key role in the mental images of the world people hold, their criteria by which to evaluate those mental images and the judgements they make.

Research Questions and Methodology

The research presented here is an effort to begin to unpack the framing of the news accounts about the emerging global economy. The objective of the study is to explore the overarching frame for reporting on the global economy. More specifically, this inquiry investigates the relationship of long term economic performance of foreign economies to news coverage over time. what economic factors, rather than short term news events, asking how specific foreign economic performance influences economic coverage in magazines.[12]

Magazines were chosen for this study because since their inception, news magazines and business news magazines have seen it as their mandate to provide analysis and to synthesize current news.[13] They generally try to have a broader, more far reaching point of view than daily newspapers and television, and, in a sense, can be said to summarize the attitudes of other media. Finally, news magazines tend to be influencial with opinion leaders.[14]

The methodology draws on David Phillips' notion of a found experiment.[15] In a found experiment, specific, measurable events serve as independent variables and are related to human activity with is the dependent variables. For example, Phillips has studied death rates around holidays.

In this study, the coverage of the British and French economies in American magazines was analyzed for the years 1981 to 1990.[16] Measurable economic performance serves

as the independent variable. Coverage is the dependent variable.

Particular attention was paid to the years 1983 and 1989. Using gross domestic or national product as a measure of economic growth and positing that economic growth is a positive sign for the economy, in 1983, the French economy under the socialist government of Francois Mitterand, performed more poorly than the British economy, led by the conservative Margaret Thatcher. In 1989, the roles were reversed and the French economy under Mitterand grew faster than the British economy under Thatcher.

The comparison of the coverage of Britain and France was particularly suitable as a found experiment because the size of the economies of both countries and their standards of living by many measures are just about the same. In 1988, for example, the gross domestic product of the United Kingdom was about $822 billion compared to a gross domestic product in France of $949 billion. In comparison, the GDP of Germany was $1,201 billion; Japan $2,848 billion. The GDP that year was $4,817 billion in the United States. In addition the purchasing power of British and French citizens were similar $8,456 in the United Kingdom compared to $8,198. Interestingly, while Americans had purchasing power of $12,999, purchasing power in Japan was only $8,192 and in Germany it was $7,747. Finally, in terms of the number of cars, telephones and television per thousand--all accepted standards of living measures--were remarkably similar.[17]

The research question asked how did economic growth relate to total news coverage of the economies in question in U.S. magazines? To determine the relationship of economic growth to newsworthiness, the number of stories listed in the Readers Guide to Periodical Literature every year from 1981 to 1990 under the categories economic relations, commercial policy and economic policy for the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Japan was totalled and then compared to the percentage growth or dip in the Gross Domestic/National Product of those countries.[18]

Germany and Japan served as control groups for Britain and France. Those particular categories in the Readers Guide were selected because they were most likely to contain stories about the general economic conditions and policies in those countries under study as opposed to the category "commerce" which often listed stories about international deals concluded by individual companies.

Based on the results of that comparison, a second comparison was made. The number of stories in the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature under the category U.S. Commerce for the United Kingdom, France, Germany and Japan from 1981 and 1990 was totalled and then compared to the merchandise trade balance between the United States and those individuals countries.

After the analysis of the Readers Guide listings, a content analysis of selected magazine articles was conducted to see if the coverage of the United Kingdom and France markedly differed in the target years.

At the outset of the research, two hypothesis were formulated. First, there should be a link between economic performance in a country and the amount of coverage it receives. Secondly, if the first hypothesis was not supported, another aspect of economics would be correlated to the amount of economic coverage a country receives, supporting the notion that news is in some way driven by "social reality."

Presentation of Findings

Figure 1 shows the percentage growth or decline of the gross domestic/national product of five industrial powers from 1981 to 1990 (the figures for Germany begin in 1982). Over the total period under examination, the average growth rate in GDP for France was 2.3 percent; the United Kingdom's was 2.5 percent; Germany's (from 1982 to 1990) 2.3 percent and Japan's was 4.3 percent.

Figure 2 shows the number of stories listed in the Readers Guide To Periodical Literature in the years 1981 to 1990 in three categories commercial policy, economic policy and economic relations for United Kingdom, France, Germany and Japan. If economic performance is the trigger for coverage of a foreign country's economy, the total number of stories about the United Kingdom and France should be just about equal. Instead, there are 85 stories about the United Kingdom and 63 about France. There were 68 stories about Germany, which had similar economic growth to both France and Britain. And there were 298 stories about Japan.

At first, it may seem that Japan's robust growth could be responsible for the increased coverage. But looking at individual years, this supposition does not prove to

be the case. In 1990, for example, when the Germany economy grew at a hefty rate of 4.5 percent, it was the subject of only four stories. In 1986, when the Japanese economy grew at a rate of 2.3 percent, it had 34 stories. That same year the German economy grew at a rate of 2.2 percent and was the subject of two stories while the economy of the United Kingdom grew 3.8 percent and was also the subject of two stories listed in the categories under examination.

In general, there seems to be no clear correlation between the economic performance of a country and the amount of coverage it received. Japan received the most coverage in 1985, when it was the subject of 46 stories. In that year, growth in its gross domestic product was 5.2 percent. In 1988, when Japan had a growth rate of 6.2 percent, there were only 15 stories in the categories listed above for Japan.

The Pearson test for correlation, however, reveals an interesting insight, however. There is no statistically significant correlation between growth in gross domestic product and the number of stories in the categories of economic relations, economic policy and commercial policy for Japan, Germany and the United Kingdom.[19] For France, however, there was a very strong statistically significant negative correlation between growth in the gross domestic product and the number of stories about France. In other words, the worse the French economy performed, the more stories written about it.[20]

The reason for this negative correlation is not hard to determine. France was the subject of the most stories in 1981 and 1983. In those two years it turned in the worst economic performance in terms of GDP growth in the entire period under study.

Content Analysis of the Coverage of France Versus United Kingdom

Although the coverage of France was clearly skewed towards the years in which it turned in a poor economic performance, that does not shed light on how economic performance in a foreign country is portrayed in U.S. news magazines. In an effort to understand and reflect on that issue, the coverage of France and the United Kingdom was compared.

As Figure 3 shows, the economies of France and the United Kingdom did not move in lock step during the 1980s. In the beginning of the decade, the United Kingdom fell

more rapidly into the recession which also was felt in the United States and Germany. The United Kingdom began to come out of the recession in 1982 and from 1983 through 1988, like the United States, it experienced robust growth. By 1989, however, the United Kingdom began to slip back into the recession in which it currently finds itself mired.

France, on the other hand, did not fall as quickly into recession as its European neighbors. In 1981, its economy was sluggish and in 1982, it experienced a modest expansion. In 1983, growth slowed considerably although the economy never fell into an economic contraction which defines a recession. From 1983 through 1987, the French economy expanded at a sluggish rate. However, in 1988 it grew sharply and for the next two years significantly outperformed the British economy.

The objective of this section was to compare the coverage of the two countries in 1983, when the gap in economic performance most vividly favored the British over the French and in 1989, when French economic performance was markedly stronger.[21]

The story of the French economy in 1983 has its roots in the French elections of 1981. In that year, the Socialist Francois Mitterand won the presidency of the France. A Socialist majority was swept into the National Assembly as well.

The Mitterand election was notable for three reasons. First, it marked the first time the coalition of parties claiming to be the heirs to Charles De Gaulle relinquished power in France at the national level. Secondly, although he did not need to do so to achieve a parliamentary majority, Mitterand named four members of the Communist party, which had run in tandem with the Socialists, to the cabinet. It was the first time that Communists had held cabinet seats in a government of a member of NATO. Finally, the Mitterand election seemed to run counter to the conservative trend that brought Margaret Thatcher to power in the United Kingdom, Ronald Reagan to office in the United States and later Helmut Kohl to the chancellorship of the German government.

Mitterand won the election, at least in part, because the French economy was caught in the same economic slowdown that was hobbling the rest of the industrialized world at the time. His predecessor, the conservative Valery Giscard d'Estaing had argued that there was little the French government could do until the entire world economy turned around.[22]

Mitterand thought differently. Upon his assumption of power, he launched what would be called the "Dash for Growth."[23] His economic program had several elements. He cut the work week in France from 40 to 39 hours; added a fifth week to the annual vacation to which French workers were entitled and raised the minimum wage and some social security benefits. He raised taxes to pay for the increased benefits.

But Mitterand went further. He nationalized seven major industrial groups including banking, chemicals, electronics, and aerospace. And he announced an aggressive program of government investment to build a high technology sector in France.

As the economist Robert Kuttner pointed out in a long analysis of the French economy, Mitterand's nationalization of key industries was not out of keeping with the French tradition of heavy government involvement in its basic industries.[24] And even Business Week conceded that the French had a 300 year tradition of state intervention in the economy.[25]

By the Spring of 1983, however, it was clear that the French "Dash for Growth" had not worked. Inflation and unemployment had risen, the trade deficit had grown to $14 billion, a new all time high for France, and it had become the third largest debtor in the world at that time, behind only Mexico and Brazil. The French franc had weakened seriously against both the dollar and the German mark and eventually had to be devalued three times within 22 months. The government was running a budget deficit equal to about three percent of the gross domestic product, up from one percent in years past and economic growth was falling.

The question was--why was the French economy faltering when the rest of the industrialized world was clearly moving into a period of economic recovery? The answer in the U.S. news weeklies was consistent, although it was delivered with different nuances. Mitterand's misguided policies were the source of France's economic troubles.

The attack on Mitterand's policies came in two guises. Several articles in Business Week faulted Mitterand for trying to stimulate the French economy when the rest of the industrialized world was still in a recession. For example, in January, 1983 Business Week wrote, Mitterand "made a mistake stimulating the economy before the world wide recovery was underway." In February, it wrote of Mitterand's "misguided stimulative

policies." In April, the magazine opined that due to the stimulative policy, "France will be the only country not to benefit from the recovery." In May, on the eve of the summit of the seven Western industrial powers in Williamsburg, VA, Business Week noted that France was paying the "price for policy mistakes since 1981." Finally, in August of that year, Business Week wrote that France was "paying for the mistakes of 1981."[26]

Business Week's analysis went along these lines. The effort to stimulate the economy increased the purchasing power of the French population. They turned to foreign imports offered by countries still in recession and that triggered a balance of trade deficit, which in turn led to pressure to devalue the franc, which in turn led to inflation, unemployment and budget deficits.

Mitterand, himself, who reversed his course to a degree by launching an austerity program consisting of budget and tax cuts in 1983, had a somewhat different analysis. While acknowledging that the French economy was heading for tough times, he blamed the Germans and the Americans for not stimulating their economies quickly enough and for not slowing the rise in strength of their currencies.[27]

In general, Business Week's analysis of the French problems was offered in economic terms even if it reflected a specific vision of economics. For example, Business Week did not comment on the success or failure of Mitterand's policy of using the government to invest in specific industry sectors except to note when managers of large scale nationalized industries chafed in their relationship with the government.[28] Nor did it ever note that even after Mitterand launched his austerity program, he maintained the shortened work week and lengthened vacations for workers, or that he successfully restructured the way social security benefits were allocated, making it more equitable.[29]

Perhaps in its most pessimistic report, the magazine predicted that Mitterand's austerity policy would not work.[30] That prediction proved wrong and the French economy enjoyed steady growth from 1984 through 1990.

Unlike Business Week, the news weeklies added a second element to the analysis of why the French had gone wrong. The news weeklies implied that in addition to pursuing incorrect policies given France's position in the world economy, Mitterand's economic philosophy--i.e. socialism--was to blame for the faltering French economy as well. For

example, in April 1983, after Mitterand announced his austerity program, Time announced that "Mitteranomics" had failed because he wrongly applied "economic theories that had been discredited in other industrial countries."

It also warned that although the Communists had been effective members of the current cabinet, they had infiltrated all levels of the government and could make demands after the 1986 parliamentary elections. Writing in Newsweek, conservative economist Milton Friedman, argued that Mitterand had faced the same problems as Thatcher and Reagan but his policies had failed, demonstrating that the Labor Party in the United Kingdom and the Democratic Party in the U.S. were "intellectually bankrupt" as well and there were no credible alternatives to conservative economic policies.[31]

But even conservative economics does not lead to never ending economic growth. If the lethargic French economic policies were the fault of policy mistakes and perhaps an exhausted economic philosophy, what was the explanation after ten years of Thatcherism when British economic performance began to falter?

The poor showing of the Conservative Party in the European parliamentary elections in the summer of 1989 and the resignation of Chancellor of the Exchequer Nigal Lawson in the fall of 1989 were the news hooks for stories assessing British economic performance. And the facts were grim. The prime rate had risen from 7.5 percent to 15 percent; the trade deficit had soared from $4.5 billion to $25 billion annually; inflation had crept back up to 8 percent and was climbing; manufacturing capacity had reached just to the level it was in 1973; and unemployment was 7 percent and climbing. The interest rates and inflation rates were the highest in the industrialized world.

Curiously enough, in the news weeklies, none of these problems were attributed directly the Margaret Thatcher's policies. Instead, Thatcher's style of governing was blamed and news magazines reported her colleagues urging her to change her autocratic manners to be more effective. She had lost her legendary political touch. Her primary policy failure, in these accounts, was her inability to cut social welfare spending, particularly on the national health service and the primary political problem was negotiating the United Kingdom's relationship with the European Monetary System. As a part of that negotiation, Thatcher had refused to devalue the pound quickly enough.[32]

In addition, in the small selection of articles describing the British economic woes, Thatcher's accomplishments were duly noted. Those accomplishments included curbing the power of unions, reducing the national debt and expanding the private sector. But Thatcher's major achievement, according to these accounts, was psychological. For example, U.S. News and World Report suggested that Thatcher had changed attitudes in the United Kingdom and unleashed the entrepreneurial spirit. There had been a "renaissance of British self confidence," the magazine rhapsodized.[33]

When the issue is economic success, a different problem exists. When the French economy began to outperform the British economy in 1989, there were virtually no stories listed in the Reader's Guide categories under study. The strong economic performance simply was not explained or noted.

On the other hand, in 1983 the beginnings of the British recovery was noted, and credited to Thatcher, even before there was significant economic changes. In June, 1983 Thatcher faced an election. And although there were 3.3 workers million still unemployed, once again she was credited establishing a climate conducive for economic growth in Great Britain. Business Week wrote that Thatcher had come to power on an economic platform of pride, thrift, hard work, and faith in self. "And it worked," the magazine asserted. The budget deficit had been reduced and inflation was down. That was "worth 3.3 million unemployed."[34]

Interestingly, from February to August, 1983, Great Britain's balance of payments went from a surplus of $7 billion to a deficit of $1.4 billion and its budget deficit was 2.75 percent of GDP. Its unemployment was over 11 percent and its productivity rate was only 70 percent that of the rest of Europe's.[35] In other words, the British economy at the time was not doing much better than France's, although it seemed to be moving in a positive direction while the French economy clearly had problems.

This study cannot draw definitive conclusions about differences in reporting about the economies of socialist France versus conservative Great Britain. But it does suggest that differences exist. That is, the same set of economic performance as measured by economic data do not lead to the same kind of coverage in U.S. news weeklies.

Balance of Trade and News Coverage

Other than France, for which there was a strong negative correlation, there was no correlation between economic performance as measured by GDP and news coverage measured by listings in three categories in the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature. But could another aspect of "social reality" trigger press coverage of other players in the global economy?

Figure 4 shows the U.S. merchandise trade balance with the countries under study for selected years and Figure 5 shows a comparison of the U.S. merchandise trade balance between Japan and Western Europe as a whole. Figure 6 shows the number of stories listed under the category United States Commerce in the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature and Figure 7 shows the number of stories listed under the category United States Economic Relations. Those categories were chosen as the most likely to list coverage of the United States and U.S. companies' economic interactions in the global economy.

First, it is important to note that there are many more stories about foreign trade than about the economies of foreign countries. Secondly, the Pearson test for correlation between the number of stories in the category of commerce and the U.S. merchandise balance of trade reveals that although there is not a statistically significant correlation between the number of stories in the category about Japan or Western Europe and the size of the U.S. trade deficit with those entities, there is evidently some measurable correlation.[36]

Although a statistical analysis for the correlation between the balance of trade figures and the number of stories in the economic relations category was not conducted, several points should be noted. First, despite fluctuations in the balance of trade between them, there are almost no stories about economic relations between France and the U.S. and Britain and the U.S. The number of stories about economic relations between Germany and the U.S. jump when the trade deficit between Germany and the U.S. grows. In the same way, the fluctuations in the number of stories about Japan, roughly parallels the U.S. trade deficit with Japan.

Conclusions

Several interesting observations have emerged from this study. First, and perhaps most importantly, the story of the global economy apparently has been framed primarily as a trade story, and from the U.S. point of view, a negative trade story. As the U.S. balance of trade with a country deteriorates, that country is more likely to be written about. As the U.S. balance of trade with a country improves, it is less likely to be covered.

This observation has two implications. First, at least since the War of 1812, debate about foreign trade has been a fundamental issue in U.S. politics. While the global economy is often talked about in terms of being new, foreign trade is an old story, with old frames of references. Moreover, even as a foreign trade story, it is not clear that the focus of U.S. news media should be primarily about countries with which the United States has a trade deficit. It is not clear that a positive balance of trade represents "victory" in the global economy. For example even if the the U.S. had a trade surplus with every trading partner, the world economy could still be in recession. In fact, positive trade balances theoretically can be the result of policies that are detrimental to other productive economic activity.

Secondly, framing the global economy as a foreign trade story artificially narrows potential content. There are winners and losers implicit in the coverage of foreign trade--winners have positive trade balances, losers have trade deficits. But, at least in theory, a global economy should be able to lift the economies of all countries involved.

The second observation from this research is that there seems to be the potential that coverage of foreign economies may be tinged in some ways by American economic and ideological assumptions. In this case, even when the economic data looked grim, Thatcher was given credit for improving the psychology in Great Britain. Mitterand's influence on the psychology of the French psychology went unnoted.

The third observation from this study is the internal economic workings of our overseas partners in the emerging global economy has not yet fully emerged on the magazine news agenda. As a result, readers are not alerted to social and economic structures and assumptions operative in foreign countries that differ from those in the U.S.

In fact, there seems to be an implicit assumption that the same criteria used to guide, measure and evaluate American economic performance should automatically be applied to other advanced economies. Inflation seems to be the primary worry, followed by budget and trade deficits, economic growth and then unemployment. It is not clear that those are the only priorities that can be used in evaluating the performance of foreign economies.

In conclusion, this study suggests that the U.S. news magazine media have perhaps not fully embraced the challenge of objectively preparing the minds of the American people to participate in the developing global economy.

Endnotes

1. Business Week "Special Issue: Reinventing America 1992" October 1992, pgs. 22-23

2. ibid. pg.23

3. Carey, James "The Press and Public Discourse," Kettering Review Winter, 1992 pg. 11

4. Schudson, Michael, "Preparing the Minds of the People" Three Hundred Years of American Journalism The American Antiquarian Society, 1991 pg. 423. The notion that the press is primarily responsible for the mental pictures people hold of the world outside their immediate perception comes from Lippman, Walter "The World Outside the Pictures in Our Head" in The Process and Effects of Mass Communication (Second Edition) Wilbur Schramm and Donald F. Roberts (eds.) University of Illinois Press, Urbana, IL 1971

5. For a typically cursory discussion of what is news see Mencher, Melvin News Reporting and Writing (Fifth Edition) William C. Brown Publishers, Dubuque Iowa, 1991.

6. Romano, Carlin "The Grizzly Truth about Bare Facts" Reading the News Robert Karl Manoff and Michael Schudson (eds.) Pantheon Books, New York, 1986

7. Rosengren, K.E. "Mass media and Social Change: Some Current Approaches" Mass media and Social Change E. Katz and T. Szecsko (eds.) Sage Publications, Beverly Hills 1981

8. Gitlin, Todd The Whole World is Watching University of California Press, Berkeley, CA 1980

9. Rachlin, Allan News As Hegemonic Reality Praeger Press, New York, 1988

10. Iyengar, Shanto and Donald Kinder News That Matters University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL 1987

11. Alexander, Jeffrey "The Mass Media in Systemic, Historical and Comparative Perspective" Mass Media and Social Change Katz E. and T. Szescko (eds.) Sage Publications, Beverly Hills, CA. 1981

12. The assumption here was that if there underlying economic factors that made a country seem more newsworthy, specific events--elections, changes of policy, pronouncements, etc--would seem more newsworthy as well and the country would receive more coverage.

13. Halberstam, David The Powers That Be Dell Publishing, New York, 1979

14. Weiss, C.H. "What America's Leaders Read" Public Opinion Quarterly 38,7, 1974

15. For an example of a found experiment see Phillips, David and Elliot King "Death Takes a Holiday: Mortality Surrounding Major Social Occasions" The Lancet London, England, pgs. 728-732. In a found experiment, an independent event or circumstance is used as a measure against a variable, but agreed upon, outcome. In this article, mortality rates of a religious group before and after a major holiday for that group were compared to the rates of society at large.

16. For overall coverage, the number of articles listed in the Readers Guide to Periodical Literature (New York: H.W. Wilson) was used. For content analysis, Time, Newsweek and Business Week were examined.

17. OECD Survey of the United Kingdom 1991-1992, Paris France, pg. 124

18. The Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature H.H. Wilson Co. New York, NY 1981-1990, OECD Country Surveys, Paris, France

19. For the United Kingdom $r=-.45$ and $t=.77$, for Germany $r=.01$ and $t=.028$ and for Japan, $r=-.22$ and $t=.63$, all with eight degrees of freedom.

20. For France, using the Pearson test, $r=-.74$ and $t=3.09$, which with eight degrees of freedom, is significant to the 0.02 level.

21. This is far from an exhaustive content analysis and relies heavily on reporting in Business Week. In total, there were only 31 relevant articles from 1983, of which, 12 were in Business Week. In 1989, there were only 13 articles, of which five were in news weeklies and/or Business Week. Once again, it should be stressed that the objective of this exercise is not the make definitive statements but to undercover suggestive findings.

22. Business Week January 10, 1983 pg. 46

23. Business Week April 11, 1983 pg. 44

24. The New Republic April 7, 1983 pgs. 19-23

25. January 10, 1983 pg. 54

26. Business Week January 10, 1983, pg. 67, February 14, 1983 pg. 78, April 11, 1983 pg. 44, May 30, 1983, pg. 25, August 22, 1983, pg. 126

27. Newsweek July 25, 1983 pg. 46

28. Business Week June 20, 1983 pg. 40

29. The New Republic op. cit.

30. Business Week June 20, 1983 pg. 40

31. Time April 4, 1983 pg. 36, Newsweek July 4, 1983, pg. 51

32. U.S. News and World Report May 8, 1989 pg. 56, Newsweek November 6, 1989. Business Week July 24, 1989 pg. 37

33. U.S. News and World Report April 24,1989 pg. 40, May 8, 1989 pg. 56.

34. Business Week June 6, 1983 pgs. 44-45

35. Business Week August 22, 1983 pg. 128, June 6, 1983 pg. 47

36. For Japan, $r = .57$ and $t = 1.8$, which is significant at .1 for 7 degrees of freedom. For Western Europe, for which the individual stories for France, Great Britain and Germany were added to stories listed under the general title of Western Europe, $r = .39$ and $t = 1.09$ for 7 degrees of freedom.

Percentage Growth in GDP/GNP 1981-1990

• UK Versus France

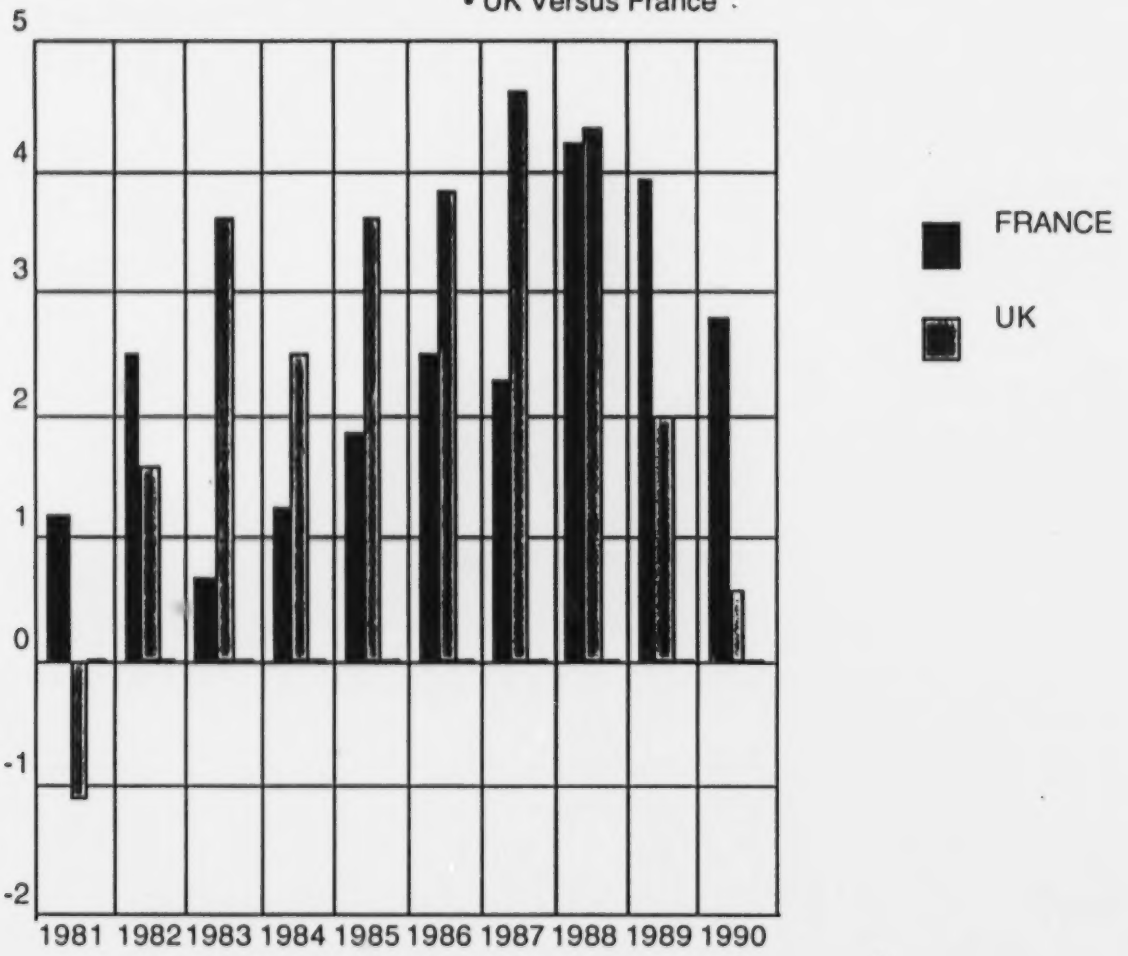


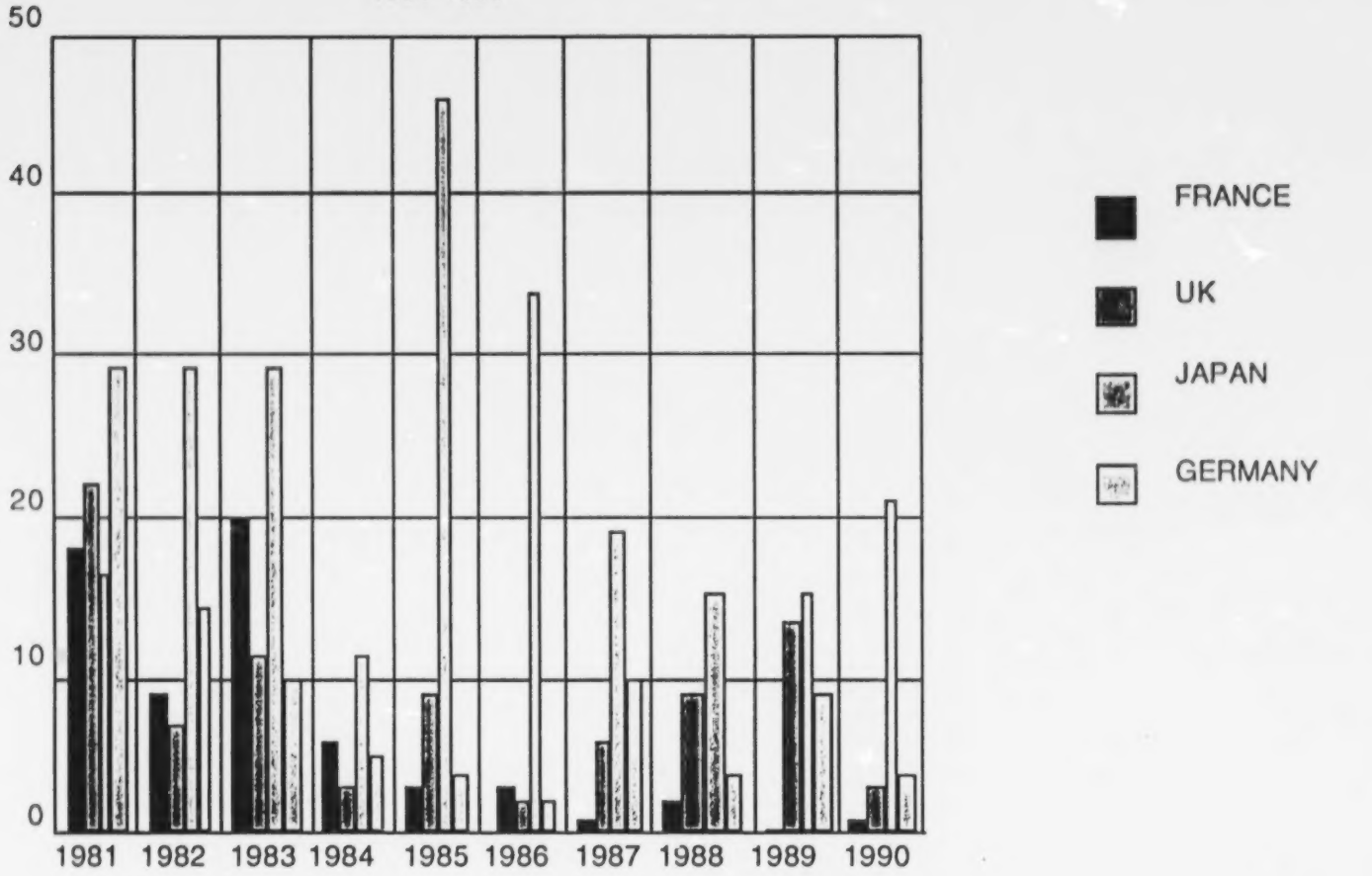
Figure 1

Source: OECD Country Surveys 1991-1992 Paris, France

Number of Stories Listed in Readers Guide in Three Economic Categories

Commercial Policy, Economic Policy, Economic Relations

1981-1990



Source: Readers Guide to Periodical Literature, H.H. Wilson, New York

Figure 2

63

Percentage Growth in GDP/GNP 1981-1990

• Five Industrial Countries

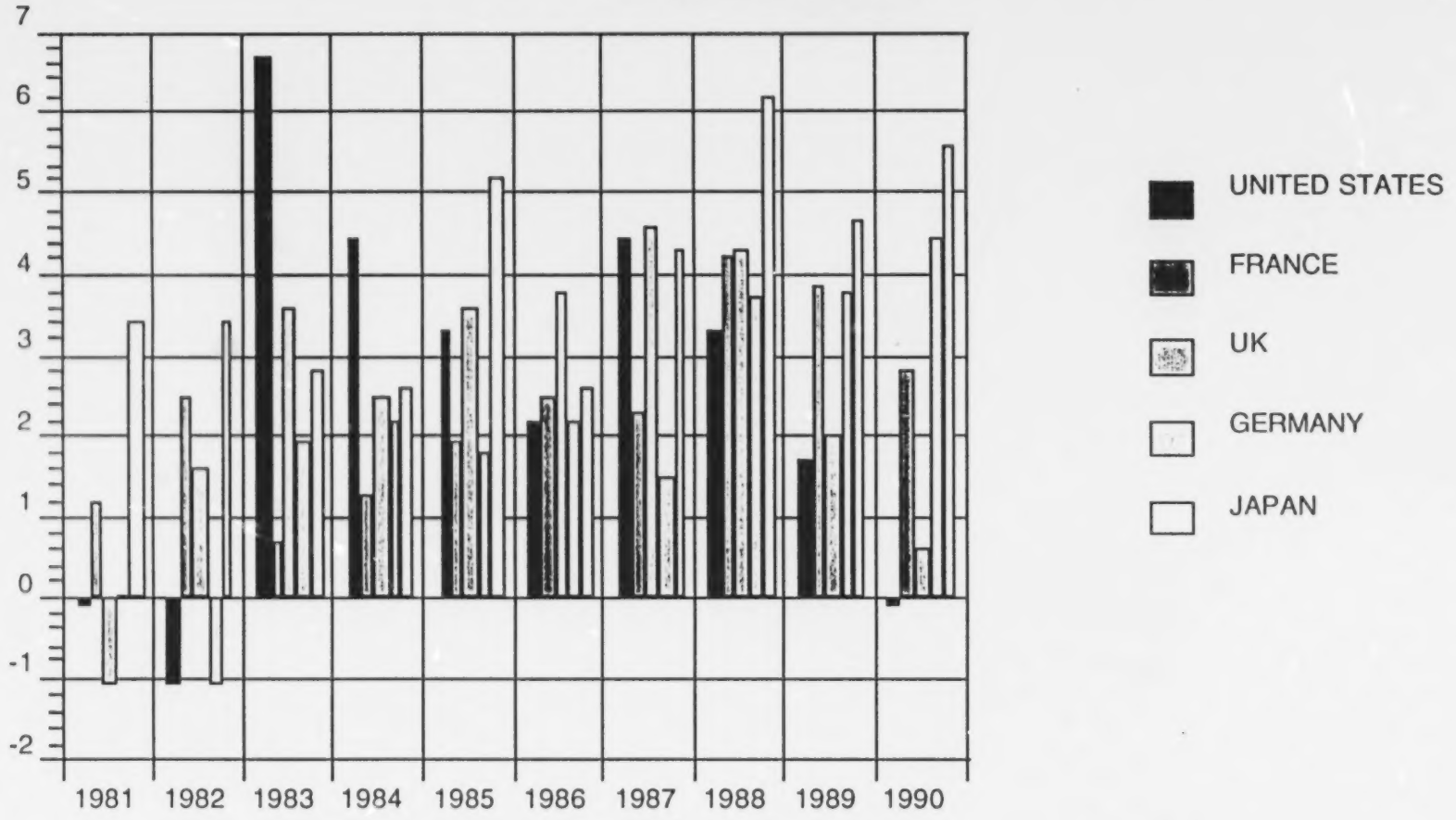


Figure 3

Source: OECD Country Surveys 1991-1992 Paris, France, Economic Report of the President, Washington, D.C. 1992

U.S. Merchandise Trade Balance

- Selected Years by Country
- (In Billions of Dollars)

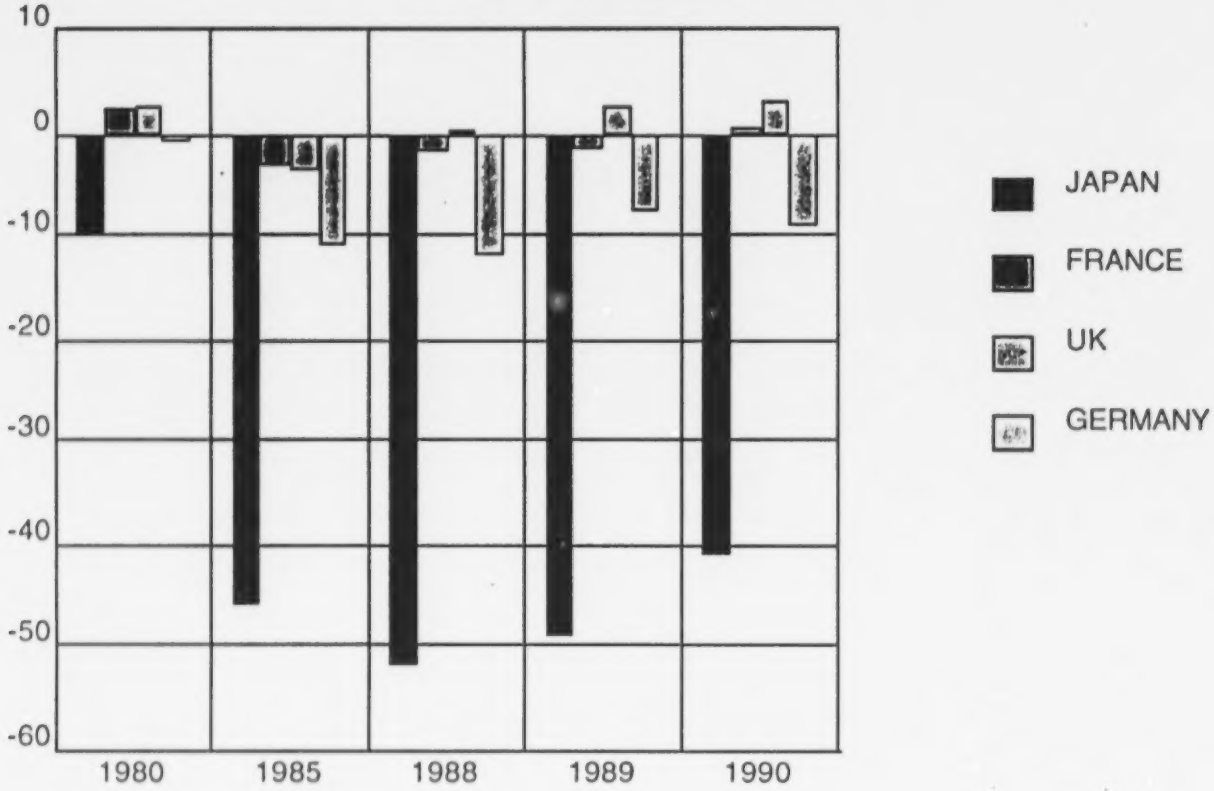
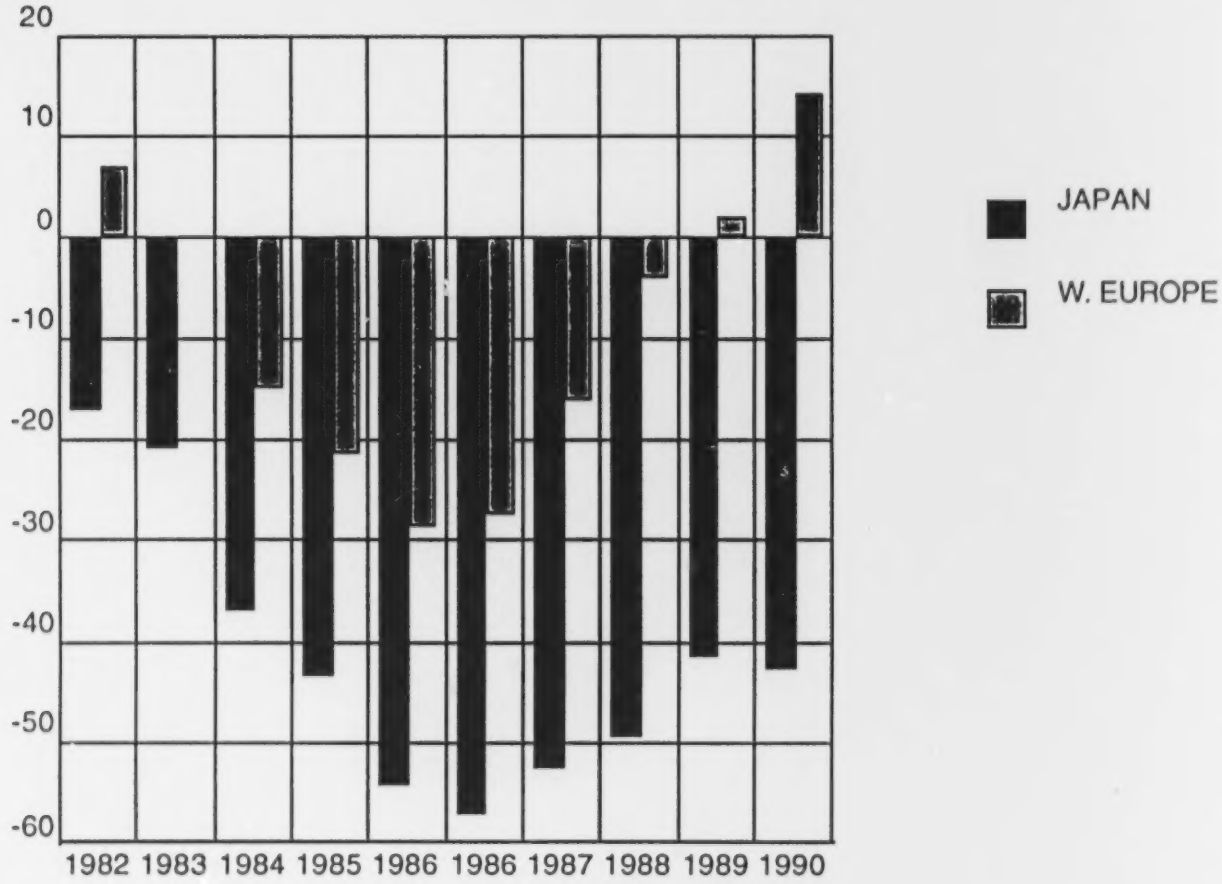


Figure 4

Source: Statistical Abstract of the United States, GPO, Washington D.C. 1991

U.S. Merchandise Trade Balance

W. Europe vs. Japan
(In Billions of Dollars)



SOURCE: ECONOMIC REPORT TO THE PRESIDENT, WASHINGTON D.C. 1992

Figure 5

Number of Stories Listed in Readers Guide Under Commerce With U.S.

1981-1990

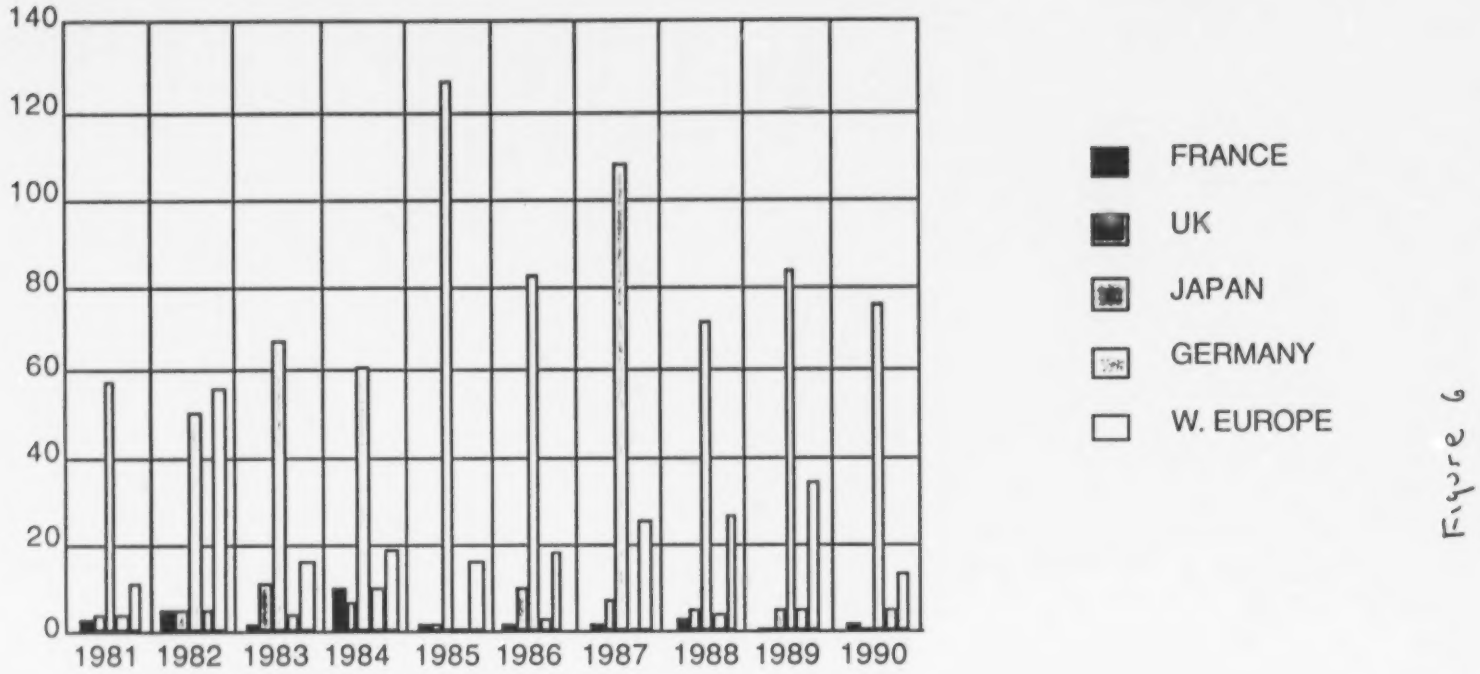
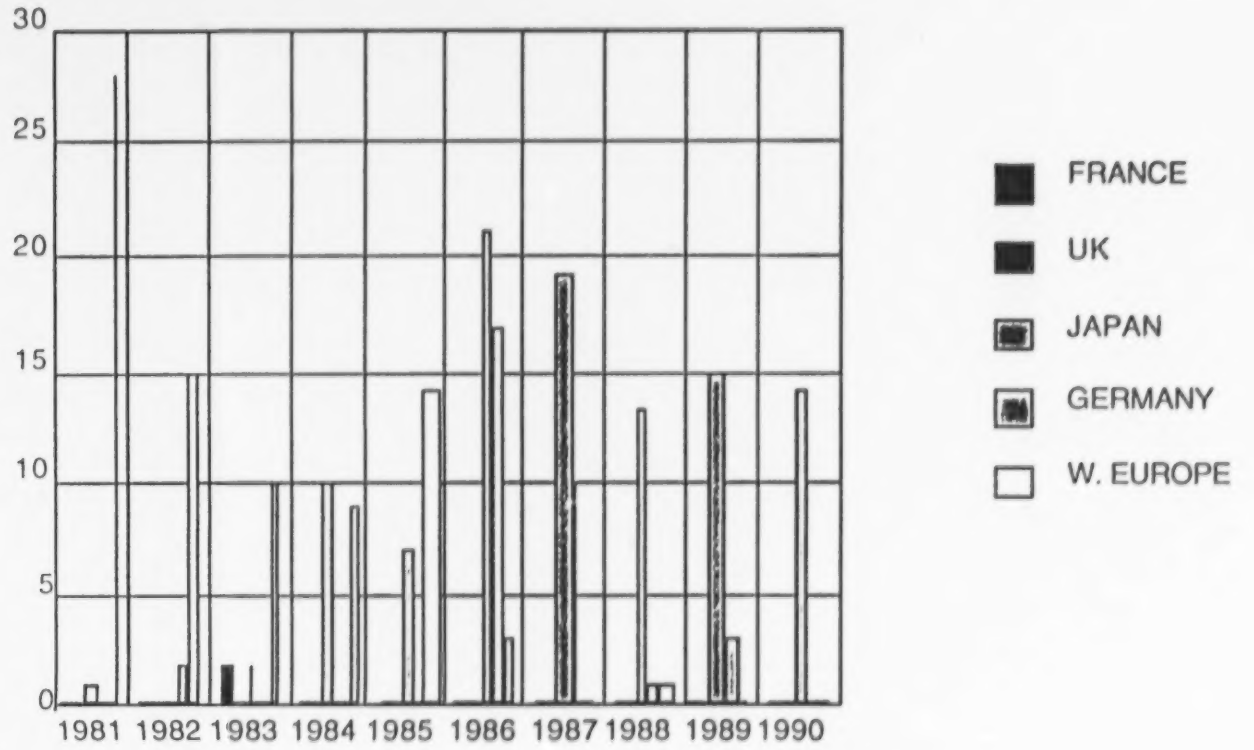


Figure 6

Source: Readers Guide to Periodical Literature, H.H. Wilson, New York

Number of Stories Listed in Readers Guide Under Economic Relations With U.S.

1981-1990



Source: Readers Guide to Periodical Literature, H.H. Wilson, New York

Figure 7

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Re-examining the American Magazine Industry: A 1990s Look at Changing Realities in Periodical Publishing

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Re-examining the American Magazine Industry:
A 1990s Look at Changing Realities in Periodical Publishing

Social, economic and technological changes have affected the magazine publishing industry. News reports have pointed to changing markets for specialized publications--both consumer and business (Donaton, 1993; Perkins, 1993). Over the past two years, particularly, stories on the economy have told not-very-encouraging news about a flat advertising market for magazines (Donaton-a, 1992; Donaton-b, 1992; Jaffe & Dupree, 1992; Rigney, 1992). Technological updates provide an almost daily stream of upgrades and improvements in desktop publishing equipment and techniques (Glass, 1992; Scanner, 1992).

News and "trend" stories in the specialized business periodicals covering the industry often present a baffling array of facts and figures on magazine titles, frequencies, distribution methods, circulation patterns and publishing locations.

This study seeks to examine certain key elements of magazine industry today. It will look at current magazine titles, frequencies, distribution methods, circulation patterns, and magazine publishing locations. This will be accomplished through studying a sample of magazines--business, consumer, health and agricultural--that are published in the United States today.

Literature Review

Scholarly literature tends to look at the magazine field in slices. Articles have dealt with everything from magazine group ownership of consumer magazines (Smith & Fowler, 1979) to specialized

magazines of the South (Riley, 1982), from city magazine ownership and numbers (Fletcher & Vanden Bergh, 1982) to ownership and employment trends in the specialized business press (Endres, 1988/1989). Each of these studies has provided important insights into seldom examined branches of the magazine industry. Such are important contributions to the understanding of the magazine field. However, these studies fail to offer a comprehensive look at the magazine industry, an industry that has been going through a dizzying array of changes over the past decade. Moreover, each of these published studies has used different methodologies, preventing comparisons among and between areas of the magazine field.

The most recent published study dealing with one branch of the magazine field appeared in the 1993 *Sourcebook* of *Folio: The Magazine of Magazine Management* (Kobak, 1993). Although he focused solely on the consumer magazine field, James B. Kobak charted changes over a three-year period. He found, for example, an increase in the total number of consumer magazines published, in spite of the uncertain economic environment. He also found a constriction in the number of issues published and the average circulation as a means to reduce costs. It is unclear if the specialized business publications, health journals or agricultural magazines are dealing with the economic environment in a similar manner.

The coverage in *Folio:* and other specialized business magazines serving the publishing industry tend to offer contradictory reports of how magazines are dealing with the economic environment.

Stories on circulation methods are a case in point. A "trend story" in *Folio:*, for example, suggested that controlled circulation was losing favor. Jean Marie Angelo reported that 50 percent of the BPA members had tried at some time to convert from free to paid. Those experimenting with conversion read like a who's who in specialized business publishing: Miller-Freeman, Intertec and Billboard among others (Angelo, 1992). Yet other stories in the same periodical suggest the opposite--that both consumer and specialized business publications were enjoying the benefits of controlled circulation. Included among the benefits are enhanced demographics (Sghia, 1990). The recent decision by the Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC) to recognize controlled circulation for consumer magazines merely acknowledged the growth of nonpaid subscriptions in that segment of the magazine industry (Garry, 1990).

Also with regard to circulation, specialized business publications covering magazine industry news also report extensively on the flat newsstand sales, a reflection of the downturn economically (Teinowitz, 1991; Donaton-c, 1992). Generally these accounts are based on information released by the ABC.

Few stories have provided frequency updates. Reports of launches include frequency and some updates have the number of times a periodical is issued. However, frequency is seldom the focus. A notable exception was Straight Arrow's constriction of the frequency of *US* magazine (Silber, 1991).

Clearly, in light of the large number of stories which point to possible changes within the magazine industry, the time seemed right for an examination of the industry in certain key areas: type

and topic of publication, location, longevity, frequency, circulation and audit. Whenever possible, comparisons will be made with previously published studies to chronicle changes over time.

Methodology

In order to examine the state of the magazine industry across the various areas, Standard Rate and Data (SRDS) volumes were used. The three specific editions used in this study were *Consumer Magazine and Agri-media Rates and Data* (March 1992), *Business Publication Rates and Data* volumes I and II (April 1992). (Volume one provided the general listings of specialized business publications; volume two offered listings of health journals.) SRDS volumes were used for a number of reasons. First, these volumes provided one of the most comprehensive listings of periodicals issued in the United States. Second, they were readily accessible. Finally, SRDS represents one of the most widely used sources for drawing samples for other studies in the magazine field (Kobak, 1993; Abrahamson, 1992; Endres, 1988). SRDS does have its limitations, however. It fails to list advertising-free magazines or periodicals that have only a limited advertising base. Moreover, new launches are not likely to be included (Kobak, 1990). Nonetheless, SRDS still represents one of the best sources of information for analysis on the magazine industry in the United States. Information contained in SRDS is provided by the publisher and is (or is supposed to be) regularly updated.

A random sample was drawn from the three SRDS volumes noted above. The 10-percent sample was drawn based on a randomly selected first magazine. Every tenth magazine from that starting point was included for analysis. The following periodicals

were excluded from the publication universe: duplicate listings,[1] special "show" publications,[2] annual buyer's guides or directories,[3] and theater and entertainment "programs."[4]

In all, 559 publications were included in the sample--24 agricultural publications; 162 consumer magazines; 76 health journals, and 297 specialized business periodicals.

A 21-item instrument was developed to extract information for analysis. The information was drawn from the SRDS listings of these 559 sampled publications. The information covered the following areas: type of periodical, magazine subject matter, location of publisher, audit information, frequency, year established, circulation, controlled distribution, paid subscriptions, newsstand sales, and comparative circulation information. Two coders were used. Coder training allowed for a high degree of intercoder agreement (in excess of .99). The coding sheets were then entered into the computer and analyzed using SPSS.

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

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[1]These included duplicate listings within the same volume and between volumes. In instances of duplicate listings between volumes, the periodical was placed in the category appropriate for its content and the nature of its audience.

[2]A number of periodicals, especially those listed in *Business Publication Rate and Data*, vol. 1, issue special daily editions to cover trade shows or conventions. These often have names which are variations on the regularly appearing publication's name but usually have a separate listing in SRDS. However, the staff of the special issues is usually also the staff of the regularly appearing publication.

[3]These are most frequently issued annually and are usually offered to regular subscribers to the sponsoring publication. However, the buyer's guide or directory often has its own separate SRDS listing.

[4]These are now listed under the entertainment guides and programs category in *Consumer Magazine and Agri-Media* volume.

Type of publication:

What types of publications currently dominate in the magazine industry?

Location of publication:

Is there a concentration of publishers in certain geographical locations? Do certain types of publications (consumer, specialized business, agricultural and health) cluster in certain geographical areas?

Longevity:

How long have sampled periodicals been publishing? Are there variations according to category and subject matter of publication?

Frequency:

Are there changes taking place with regard to frequency? Are periodicals reducing their frequency in light of the negative economic environment? Are there variations in frequency by type of publication?

Circulation:

What are the mean circulation figures for these magazines categories? How do these vary among groups and are any comparisons possible with earlier studies?

How extensive is controlled circulation within the magazine field generally? What types of publications have turned to this distribution method?

At paid circulation periodicals, what is the most common method of distribution: subscription or newsstand? What types of publications rely primarily on newsstand sales?

Audits:

What portion of the magazines are audited? What audit groups are preferred? What types of periodicals are not audited?

These, then, were the research questions that were posed in the analysis of these 559 periodicals from the consumer, specialized business, health and agricultural markets.

Findings

Type of publication:

The magazine industry is as diverse as the interests and activities of the American people. In the consumer, business, agricultural and health categories, publications deal with the specialized and general interests of readers. The health and agricultural publications were specialized from the beginning. However, journals in the health field, especially, have become even more specialized, a reflection of the medical discipline in the United States. Many of the journals introduced in the 1980s and later (a topic to be discussed later) are highly specialized in content. Examples of recently launched health periodicals reflect this trend: *Journal of Reconstructive Microsurgery* (1991); *Journal of Oncology Management* (1992); *Cerebral Cortex* (1991), and *Medical Industry Executive* (1992).

The agricultural publications, likewise, have become more specialized. This specialization has come primarily through focusing on one specific geographic area. However, this specialization is less likely to be a recent development. Examples of more recent launches covering the agricultural market are: *Georgia Farmer* (1983); *Indiana AgriNews* (1982); and *The New Farm: The Magazine of Regenerative*

Agriculture (1979). The late 1970s and early 1980s appear to be the last growth period for agricultural magazines. (This will be discussed more fully in a later section.)

The specialized business press covers a wide variety of industries, businesses, occupations and trades. In this study, the field was broken down into nine large categories, the same as those used by Endres in her study of the 1986 specialized business press (Endres, 1988/1989) (see Table 1).

Table 1

Specialized Business Publications

by Category

	1992		1986	
Category	N	%	N	%
Science/ Medicine	38	12.8	59	15.8
Professional	32	10.8	53	14.2
Business/ Management	40	13.5	49	13.1
Transportation	21	7.1	38	10.2
Service	32	10.8	28	7.5
Retail	36	12.1	43	11.5
Industrial	36	12.1	52	13.9
Building trades	16	5.4	23	6.1
Other	32	10.8	29	7.8

The specialized business magazine field in 1992 is not wholly different from 1986. There appears to be a slight decline in the number of science/medicine periodicals. However, that decrease may be more apparent than real. Certain science/medicine books of 1986 may now be listed in the separate SRDS health volume.

Of greater interest are decreases in other categories. The transportation and the professional categories appear to have experienced a decrease over the six-year period.

The transportation decrease was not unexpected. The industry is a mature one and advertising cutbacks have been especially detrimental in this field (Endres-a, 1993).

Decreases in the professional category are more difficult to explain. The number of professionals in America have not decreased and their purchasing power (in business and in personal life) remains strong (Census, 1992). Certainly this situation bears further examination.

On the positive side, the service category appears to be growing in importance in the specialized business field. This reflects its growth as an industry in the U.S. economy (Census, 1992).

On the consumer side, a close comparison with earlier studies is difficult. Kobak's work on 1988 publications provides the closest parallel, although the extent of the comparisons is limited. Such is particularly the case when examining the topics of the consumer publications.

The 1992 consumer titles surveyed yielded a wide variety of subject matters from cooking to transportation. (Interestingly, although transportation appears to be a static field in specialized business publishing, it remains a popular category in the consumer field). Lifestyle-related books from parenting to health/fitness also remain popular. For purposes of analysis, these specific interest areas were grouped into five broad categories: hobby, sports, lifestyle, city/regionals, other. Hobby publications (N=42, or 25.8

percent) included periodicals covering cooking and dining, transportation, crafts/games, pets and gardening. Sports periodicals (N=28, or 17.2 percent) included the general sporting books as well as the specialized periodicals covering just one activity (e.g. golfing, jogging, tennis). Lifestyle publications (N=45, or 27.6 percent) yielded publications on parenting, health/fitness, travel and fashion. City/regional publications (N=23, or 15.3 percent) included both the general city/regional magazines as well as the location-based business periodicals. The other category (N=25, or 15.3 percent) covered a range of publications from news magazines to college alumni periodicals.

The majority of these books were specialized in focus. The largest number of sports books surveyed, for example, dealt with a specific sport, a finding in keeping with Kobak in 1988 (Kobak, 1990). The hobby and lifestyle publications thrive within a specialized focus. In general, both are characterized by smaller circulations and less frequent publication cycles (both topics to be discussed later). Similarly, the sports and city/regional publications follow similar trends: smaller circulations and less frequent publishing cycles.

Location

The magazine field is a decentralized industry. New York City and the Mideast no longer dominate in the magazine publishing field. The decentralization of the field appears to be a fairly recent development. As late as 1986, New York City and the Mideast was the location where the greatest number of specialized business periodicals were published (Endres, 1988/1989). The Great Lakes states were second. In 1992, just the opposite is true. The Great

Lakes states were the home of the greatest number of specialized business books (see Table 2).

Table 2

Locations of Magazines

Geographical Category	Type of Magazine: Business N	Business %	Consumer N	Consumer %	Agricultural N	Agricultural %	Health N	Health %
New England	30	10.1	10	6.2	3	12.5	6	7.9
Mideast	65	21.9	34	21.0	1	4.2	30	39.5
Great Lakes	70	23.9	27	16.7	7	29.2	12	15.8
Plains	7	2.4	4	2.5	2	8.3	7	9.2
Southeast	59	19.8	23	14.2	3	12.5	8	10.5
Southwest	18	6.1	16	9.9	3	12.5	2	2.6
Rocky Mountain	9	3.0	8	4.9	2	8.3	2	2.6
Far West	38	12.8	39	24.1	3	12.5	9	11.8

Even in the consumer field, the Mideast is not the location of the greatest number of magazines. It is second to the Far West. Only in the health field does New York and the Mideast retain its geographical domination. As might be expected, the Great Lakes states remain the most common location for agricultural publications.

What is notable about this examination is the emergence of certain geographical areas in the publishing field. In the consumer field, for example, the largest number of publications are located in the Far West. This is a recent development. Almost 70 percent of the consumer books based in the Far West were launched in 1970 or after. In fact, the largest number of the consumer magazines launched in the 1980s were based in the Far West. This time period coincided with the launches of certain types of magazines. The

largest number of sports and city/regional publications are based in the Far West. The region is also the home of a large number of hobby publications.

The Southeast has similarly emerged as important magazine publishing center but its importance is not limited to one particular type of publication. In the specialized business field, for example, the Southeast region has grown considerably as a base of publishing. In 1986, only 11.9 percent of the specialized business periodicals were based in this region. By 1992, that percentage had reached 19.8. New publications (launches since 1980) account for much of the growth in this region as well. Unlike the Far West, the Southeast has no real pockets of magazine specialization by topic. The largest number of Southeast-based business publications cover the science/medical field (N=13), professional category (N=9) and other group (N=11). On the consumer side, the region has publications in the lifestyle (N=7), city/regional (N=7) and hobby (N=5) categories. In his study of specialized magazines of the South, Riley outlined the growth of publishing in the region, particularly after 1970 (Riley, 1982). Although editors told Riley they did not expect such dynamic growth to continue (Riley, 1982), it appears that their outlook was unduly pessimistic.

The Mideast is similarly diversified with its greatest strength in the science/medical area (N=45). However, after that, the concentration of publication is far less evident. On the specialized business side, the region is the home to the largest number of publications covering the business and management (N=11) and the retail (N=11) businesses, as might be expected given the region's

economic base. On the consumer side, the region is also the home of the greatest number of lifestyle publications (N=13) and tied with the Far West on the number of hobby magazines (N=11).

On the negative side, however, the Mideast is experiencing only minimal renewal in the publishing industry. The largest number of new magazines are finding their homes outside of the Mideast region. However, the New York City/Mideast region remains the home of the greatest portion of the most widely circulating publications, or those with circulations in excess of one million. Three others] are based in the Southeast and two in the Great Lakes region.

Longevity

In spite of the reports on suspensions, mergers and deaths, the magazines sampled from SRDS[5] are enjoying a fairly long life (see Table 3).

[5]This section on longevity does not account for magazines that do not live long enough to be included in SRDS. Mean life is based on the magazines listed in SRDS at the time the sample was drawn.

Table 3

Magazine Type by Launch Date

Year of Launch	Type of Magazine: Business N	Business %	Consumer N	Consumer %	Agricultural N	Agricultural %	Health N	Health %
1827-1899	13	4.7	3	2.0	2	8.7	2	2.7
1900-1939	41	14.9	19	12.4	5	21.7	6	8.0
1940-1949	16	5.8	6	4.0	2	8.7	5	6.7
1950-1959	29	10.5	11	7.2	3	13.0	4	5.3
1960-1969	28	10.2	6	4.0	3	13.0	10	13.3
1970-1979	41	14.9	39	25.5	4	17.4	15	20.0
1980-1989	84	30.5	60	39.2	4	17.4	29	38.7
1990-1992	19	6.9	9	5.9	0	--	4	5.3
Mean Age (years)	32.38		25.6		44.9		22.19	

Agricultural publications had the highest mean age at 44.9 years. The distribution of launch dates in this category is especially revealing. Unlike the other categories where new publications are constantly being introduced, the agricultural category appears to be static. None in the sample had been launched in the 1990s; and the numbers (both raw and percentages) launched in the 1980s were much smaller than the other categories.

The other three categories--specialized business, consumer and health--display a more dynamic pattern, a pattern that will assure renewal in each category. More than 40 percent of the consumer and health publications had been launched since 1980; about 37 percent of the specialized business books had been started during the same period.

But growth and renewal does not cut across the specialized business and consumer category equally. The business books covering the service field, for example, are experiencing substantial growth. More than half of the magazines covering this industry were launched since 1980. Far fewer magazines have been launched since 1980 to serve the industrial and transportation businesses. On the consumer side, 45 to 50 percent of the magazines in the hobby, lifestyle, sports and city/regional categories have been launched since 1980. However, the pace of growth for the sports and city/regional groups may be slowing. The sample did not include any 1990 launches in these two areas.

Frequency

There is great diversity in frequency in the magazine industry. Monthly (12 times a year) remains the most popular publication cycle. However, it is not the frequency cycle of preference of the majority of magazines published in the United States (see Table 4).

Table 4

Magazine Type by Frequency

Annual Frequency	Type of Magazine: Business N	Business %	Consumer N	Consumer %	Agricultural N	Agricultural %	Health N	Health %
Less than 6x	28	9.8	17	10.5	0	--	11	16.9
6x	49	16.8	40	24.7	1	4.2	19	29.2
7 to 11x	31	10.6	18	11.1	5	20.8	7	10.8
12x	150	51.4	64	39.5	10	41.7	22	33.8
13 to 23x	3	1.0	2	1.2	4	16.7	1	1.5
24x	2	.7	1	.6	0	--	3	4.6
25x or more	29	9.9	20	12.3	4	16.7	2	3.1

Magazines are experimenting with a range of publication cycles. Three frequency cycles have attained the greatest popularity since 1980: quarterly, bimonthly and irregular (7 to 11 times a year). Approximately 70 percent of the publications that utilize those frequency cycles have been launched since 1980.[6]

The greatest number of the specialized business magazines to follow quarterly, bimonthly and irregular cycles fall within the science/medicine group. On the consumer side, no one type of magazine predominates in all three of these popular frequency cycles. The largest number of consumer publications using a quarterly cycle are lifestyle publications (N=9). The lifestyle and hobby publications have equal numbers of bimonthlies (N=11), while the irregular 7-to-11 times-a-year cycle dominate in the sports category. That irregular cycle may coincide with the season of the sport.

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[6]Figures are based on magazines that provided launch dates.

In spite of the growing preferences for less frequent publishing cycles, the mean number of issues per year remains relatively high. In the specialized business category, the mean number of issues is 17.8; among the consumer publications, 13.3.[7] The agricultural publications registered the largest number of mean issues per year, 18.8; and the health journals registered the fewest, 10.6. The mean number of issues per year is greatly affected by the large minority of magazines with biweekly, weekly and, in some instances, daily publication cycles.

Circulation

Specialized business publications may outnumber consumer magazines in the United States, but their readers do not. Consumer magazines have a much higher average circulation than the specialized business periodicals--and the agricultural magazines and the health journals. Yet, the consumer magazines' average circulation of 419,172.5 represents a decrease from the average circulation of 422,000 in 1988 and 612,000 in 1963 (Kobak, 1990).

A different situation exists in the specialized business field. The 1992 average circulation of 52,409.15 for specialized business books represented an increase over earlier figures for the field. In 1986, the mean circulation for publications in this category was 42,967 (Endres, 1988). Thus, the average circulation of specialized business publications has grown in the late 1980s, while the consumer magazines have decreased slightly.

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[7]The mean number of issues in the consumer magazine field actually represents a decline for 1988. Kobak reported that the average number of issues in the consumer magazine field that year was 14.2 (Kobak, 1990).

Comparisons across time are more difficult to make for health and agricultural magazines. The 1992 average circulation of 114,172.5 for agricultural magazines is probably a decrease over earlier circulations for periodicals in this class. As Merrick pointed out, the largest farming journals in the nation have constricted circulation as the "hobby" farmers have been purged from subscription lists (Merrick-a, 1993, Merrick-b, 1993). Certainly, a constriction in subscriptions would be logical in light of the reduction in the number of farms and farm operators in the United States (Census, 1992).

The health journals had an average circulation of 46,874. Comments with regard to circulation across time are difficult to make. However, in light of the new launches of journals in highly specialized fields, this figure probably is a decrease from earlier years. This 1992 figure may serve as a base comparison for future studies of this important branch of magazine publishing.

Average circulations fail to tell the whole story, however (see Table 5). The magazine field remains one serving (primarily) small, specialized audiences. More than 65 percent of the magazines issued in the United States have circulations of less than 50,000.

Table 5

Type of Magazine by Circulation Categories

Circulation Category	Type of Magazine: Business N	Business %	Consumer N	Consumer %	Agricultural N	Agricultural %	Health N	Health %
Less than 50,000	195	77.4	43	32.3	11	55.0	57	86.4
50,000 to 99,999	29	11.5	27	20.3	3	15.0	5	7.6
100,000 to 499,999	20	7.9	43	32.3	6	30.0	4	1.5
500,000 to 999,999	5	2.0	9	6.8				
1 million or more	3	1.2	11	8.3				

The largest circulating magazines tend to be drawn from specific topic areas. On the consumer side, for example, seven of the 11 publications with circulations exceeding one million cover hobbies. Yet almost 65 percent (N=24) of the hobby publications have circulations of less than 100,000. Three other publications with circulations in excess of one million cover lifestyles; yet almost 80 percent of those periodicals have circulations under 500,000. The three specialized business books with circulations in excess of one million come from three subject categories: professional, business/management and industrial. Yet in each of these categories, the largest number of the publications have circulations of less than 50,000: 60 percent of the publications covering the professions, 77 percent of the buisness/management books and 74 percent of the magazines covering industrial areas.

Another part of the circulation research questions dealt with paid vs. controlled circulation. Controlled circulation (sending the publication free to qualified individuals employed within the interest or advertising realm of the magazine (Eldred, 1988)) remains an important method of distribution. Indeed, a look at the magazine publishing field reveals its growth strength (see Table 6).

Table 6

Type of Magazine by Paid/Controlled Circulation

	Type of Magazine							
Circulation	Business		Consumer		Agricultural		Health	
Type	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Most Paid	85	34.1	108	86.4	11	55.0	39	59.1
Most Non-Paid	164	65.8	17	13.6	9	45.0	27	40.9

Controlled circulation's greatest strength remains within the specialized business field where it developed. Almost 66 percent of these publications use controlled circulation. This represents a substantial increase over 1986 figures when about 50 percent of the specialized business publications had a controlled circulation (Endres, 1988/1989).

Controlled circulation also represents an important element in the agricultural and health distribution. The large number of health publications that employ controlled circulation is perhaps understandable, since this method of distribution has a long history in the field. As early as the 1920s, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* was complaining about the large number of controlled circulation books in the field (*Medical Economics*, 1931).

Controlled circulation's infiltration of the consumer magazine field is not nearly as extensive. At least nine of the 17 consumer publications with a primarily non-paid circulation were launched since 1980. Thus, this should be closely monitored to ascertain if this is the beginning of a circulation trend in the consumer field.

Paid circulation magazines rely primarily on subscriptions for distribution. This is the case across all the magazine categories. In the specialized business field, 98.6 percent (N=73) of the magazines with a primarily paid circulation use subscriptions as the principle means of distribution; in agricultural periodicals, that figure is 87.5 percent (N=7); and in health journals, that percentage is 100 (N=31). Even in the consumer field, 70.1 percent of the magazines rely primarily on subscriptions (N=61). Perhaps, that reliance on subscriptions is fortuitous because of decreased sales at the newsstands.

Audit

Circulation audits in the magazine field remain the exception rather than the rule. In the consumer, agricultural and health categories, almost twice as many publications are unaudited as audited. A slightly different situation exists in the specialized business field. While more specialized business periodicals were not audited, the margin of unaudited over audited publications was far smaller in this category than any other segment of the magazine field (see Table 7).[8]

[8]X2=17.197786, df=3, p<.01.

Table 7

Type of Magazine by Audit

Audit Status	Type of Magazine: Business N	Business %	Consumer N	Consumer %	Agricultural N	Agricultural %	Health N	Health %
No Audit	151	50.8	104	64.2	16	66.7	56	73.7
Audit	146	49.2	58	35.8	8	33.3	20	26.3

The BPA is most likely the audit service of choice in the specialized business field (N=100 with BPA, N=33 for ABC). The consumer publications continue to turn primarily to the ABC (N=52 with ABC, N=5 with BPA). In the agricultural field, the small number of audited publications are likely to be evenly divided between the two audit groups (N=5 for ABC, N=3 for BPA). In contrast, the health publications are most likely to turn to the BPA (N=18 for BPA, N=2 for ABC).

Conclusions

"Changing" is the word that best explains the magazine industry in the 1990s. In almost every area examined, the magazine industry is changing, evolving.

The health and agricultural publications have become more specialized--in different manners and at different times. The health journal's specialization has been within medical areas--from a publication covering the cerebral cortex to one on reconstructive microsurgery.

The specialization in the agricultural market occurred much earlier--in the late 1970s, particularly. The specialization in this market was, primarily, geographically based, with farm periodicals

covering agriculture in one particular state. The 1980s and 1990s have not been as kind to the agricultural magazine market. Growth--as defined in terms of the number of periodicals launched--has been quite limited. These results suggest a less than promising future for agricultural magazines--especially if the trends apparent in the 1980s and early 1990s continue.

There are also shifts taking place within magazines titles of the consumer and specialized business fields. Within the specialized business area, shifts in magazine titles are related, primarily, to broader shifts in the economy of the nation. As one economic group rises, the number of periodicals covering it grows. The converse is also true. When an economic group reaches a mature level with little or no growth, the periodicals covering this area are likely to constrict.

The consumer magazine field has been characterized by shifting popularities. Hobby and lifestyle magazines have emerged as the growth areas, especially since 1980.

This study indicates that frequency cycles are changes. Magazines in the business, consumer, health and agricultural categories are shifting toward less frequent publication cycles. It is unknown why this has developed. Kobak (1993) speculated that the trend might be related to the negative economic environment that the magazines find themselves in the 1990s. However, this shift toward less frequent publication cycles predates this current economic downturn. Bimonthly, quarterly and irregular publication cycles have gained popularity since the 1980s.

Circulation is shifting as well. Controlled circulation is growing in popularity. In the consumer, agricultural and health categories,

circulation (both paid and controlled) is constricting. Such is not the case among business publications. Kobak speculated that the constricting circulation on the consumer publication side might be due, again, to the economic downturn, might be a method to control costs. However, long-term trends in circulation suggest otherwise. For decades, the circulation of consumer magazines has been decreasing.

It is difficult to say if these changes are due to the harsh economic environment or other deeply rooted causes. However, it is apparent that the magazine industry, as an industry, is changing. In this regard, the changes to the magazine industry may be related more to broad economic trends than conditions specific to the publishing industry at any moment in time. The magazine industry may be going along with national corporate trends of decentralizing and downsizing. Certainly, the geographic changes in the publishing industry suggest a decentralizing. Downsizing may come in two different manners in publishing--the first would be a reduction in staff, which is impossible to determine given this data; the second could be a downsizing of existing magazines. The constricting circulations and frequency cycles seem to suggest a downsizing of a kind. Whether these changes will be permanent, only time can determine. But it is apparent, from this study, that many common trends cut across all magazine categories.

This study points to two other conclusions as well. First, on a methodological level, it is possible to study the entire magazine industry by modifying the method of drawing the sample from SRDS. A 10-percent sample of publications listed in the consumer/agri-

media, business and health volumes can yield some important information. Second, the entire magazine industry needs to be studied to ascertain the trends that cut across category lines.

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Today's Diverse City Magazines Have Many Roles, Much Potential

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(A Paper prepared for delivery to the Magazine Division of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication at its national convention in Kansas City, Missouri, August 11-14, 1993.)

City magazines have been described as shortcuts to status, survival guides for affluent city dwellers, and suppliers of everything worth knowing about local lifestyles and living. They have been called puff sheets for chambers of commerce and promoters of local business and tourism. But they also have been cited as watchdogs of local government and alternative voices in one-newspaper communities. All of those descriptions can be accurately applied to one or more of the modern city magazines. For example, New York has provided survival assistance, Philadelphia has investigated a variety of local concerns, The Washingtonian has provided noteworthy coverage of government, and San Diego has offered an alternative voice to the conservative newspaper in its community. Many city magazines have encouraged local business and tourism, and most have provided extensive coverage of lifestyles. Many similarities can be found among the magazines, yet each is tailored to a particular audience in the best specialized magazine tradition of the late 20th century.

This paper, which is based on a 1993 survey of editors and publishers, will look at city magazines in the 1990s. It will explore how they perceive their roles; their content, including coverage of issues; their perceived influence in their communities; and possible trends in the field. To place this information into perspective, it is necesssary first to look briefly at the history and development of city magazines in the United States. It should also be helpful to review the major studies that have been made of them and published in popular and scholarly journals.

The city magazine idea can be traced back at least to the late nineteenth century when Colonel William Mann founded a publication called Town Topics in New York City. It contained gossip and general light news of interest to its society-minded audience.(1) An even better prototype was developed in 1925 by Harold Ross, who said his New Yorker magazine would be a reflection in word and pictures of metropolitan life. It has provided that and more. Cartoons, profiles, plotless short stories, and other features have made the New Yorker difficult to classify. Nevertheless, offerings such as "Goings On About Town," which lists theaters, movies, concerts, and myriad other activities, have become staples of most city magazines. Other city-oriented magazines were started with varying success in subsequent years before Edwin Self and a partner developed San Diego magazine in the late 1940s. San Diego has variously been described as a precursor to, or the beginning of, the modern city magazine movement which evolved in the 1960s. It has provided a successful model for more than 40 years, although many of the magazines started in those years have not shared its goal of providing an alternative voice to local monopoly newspapers.

Various factors converged to provide an impetus for the development of city magazines in the 1960s. After World War II, the nation's population expanded at a rapid rate and became increasingly concentrated in urban, and especially metropolitan, areas. By 1960, 70 percent of the population was urban and 63 percent was metropolitan. Many blacks were added to the melting

pot of ethnic groups, and all struggled to meet the challenges produced by rapid growth and an accelerated tempo of technological and social change. Conflicts and tensions evolved as local governments created in the 18th and 19th centuries sought to accommodate rapidly changing needs and attitudes of the 20th. Many inner cities deteriorated as more affluent residents, often white, moved to the suburbs.(2) The human rights movement, the conflict in Southeast Asia, and other developments prompted social unrest and change. In addition, cities became increasingly competitive for business, industry, and tourism.

City magazines developed in response to these and other changes. Many such as Atlanta were started by chambers of commerce to promote business and tourism development. A few were developed to provide alternative voices, and some were started as survival manuals for city dwellers, usually upper middle class residents whose readership could attract advertising. Many were started to serve the growing number of affluent persons in the suburbs. It appears that few were started to address city problems as such, but some came to deal with these problems in their editorial content because the problems became of increasing concern to their target readers. Newsweek magazine suggested in 1968 that some city magazines were started in search of a shortcut to status. "Every red-blooded American city craves a symphony orchestra, a civic center, a major league baseball

team and other monuments of civilization," the magazine wrote. "But these days a city can take a shortcut to status with a city magazine."(3)

Most of the nation's larger cities, and some smaller ones, became homes to one of the more than sixty diverse city and regional magazines published in the 1960s and 1970s. The primary reasons for their creation and continued existence differed at times, but some patterns had emerged by the late 1970s. David Shaw, who writes about the media for the Los Angeles Times, suggested in 1976 that city magazines had attracted a sophisticated status-conscious audience that buys new cars, stereo equipment, and fine clothes and is highly attractive to advertisers. He suggested that the audience was successful but not content, that it was concerned about achieving. "Crime, inflation, congestion and competition are the four horsemen of this audience's imminent apocalypse," Shaw wrote. "City magazines cater to those concerns -- telling their readers how to protect their homes against burglary, where to shop for bargains, how to beat rush-hour traffic, where to go for psychoanalysis, transcendental meditation or crash-dieting." He said it seems that most persons read city magazines "either to learn how to cope with their environment or to enjoy, vicariously, the success that others more wealthy and fortunate than themselves have had in so doing."(4)

The insightful analysis by David Shaw was one of many articles written in the popular press during the 1960s and 1970s

to discuss what city magazines were doing, could do, and should do. The continuing development of the genre also prompted several scholarly studies in the late 1970s and early 1980s based for the most part on surveys of the magazines. Alan Fletcher reported in 1977 that city magazines had found an important, albeit narrow, niche in the marketplace in large-sized and medium-sized metropolitan areas.(5) Fletcher and Bruce G. VandenBergh found in 1982 that city magazines were growing in numbers and acquiring problems, including problems related to advertising support and circulation.(6) Ernest C. Hynds reported in 1979 that most city magazines had some interest in pointing our local problems and needs and that about half see themselves as possible alternatives to local newspapers.(7) John P. Hayes reported in 1981 that most city and regional magazine readers comprise a specialized audience of educated, upwardly mobile, credit-card-carrying adults who attract local and regional advertisers. He determined that the magazines use a good deal of freelance material but generally do not pay well and pay on publication.(8) Sam Riley also used a survey to obtain information for his discussion of the development of city and regional magazines in the South in 1982.(9) Little has been reported in the academic journals since then, but city magazines have been the subject of a few theses and at least one dissertation. Vicki Hesterman summarizes a great deal of information about city magazines in her 1988 Ohio University

dissertation, which specifically considers "Ethical Standards of American Magazines: The Practices and Policies of City and Regional Publications."(10)

Trade journals and some members of the popular press have been the primary sources of information about the continued development of city, state and regional magazines in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Advertising Age printed a "Special Report: "City & Regional Magazines" in 1985 that discussed their growth and reasons for their success.(11) Folio magazine, the "magazine for magazine management," also has provided reports on city and regional magazines from time to time. Heidi Schultz, publisher of Chicago and a member of the City and Regional Magazine Association board of directors, reported in 1992 on what these magazines were doing to recover from the recession. She said they were among the hardest hit during the recession but were fighting back with creative, innovative programs to strengthen their advertising revenues and build their local franchises. She discussed such activities as reader-response programs, joining with advertisers in highly visible events, and the use of formatted pages built around a theme such as "River North" or St. Patrick's Day.(12) Folio reported on the battle for the Los Angeles market in September of 1990 (13) and the battle between two city magazines and the regional Texas Monthly in November of that same year.(14) Local newspapers also report on the magazines in their communities on occasion. For example,

the Chicago Tribune looked at the efforts of several magazines to win readers and advertisers in its city of publication in the late 1980s.(15)

It appeared, however, as the early 1990s arrived that there was a need for another thorough look at these publications to see what, if any, major changes had taken place. To help meet this need, the author decided to replicate a substantial part of the study he reported in 1979 and supplement it with some new questions suggested by developments since then. The questionnaire developed for this purpose probes a variety of actual and potential city magazine roles and asks questions such as these: Do city magazines emphasize reporting on lifestyles, entertainment, food, tourism, and business opportunities? Do they seek to point out community problems and needs and recommend solutions? Do they take stands on community issues through editorials or other forms of commentary? Do they seek to provide an alternative to local newspapers in reporting and commenting on community issues? If so, do they use traditional journalism techniques such as editorials, cartoons and columns? By using some of the same questions used earlier, the questionnaire generated information on trends that have evolved and how the magazines have changed.

Method

The current study is based on information obtained by sending a four-page questionnaire to a list of 74 city magazine editors or publishers. The list was compiled from lists in

Standard Rate & Data, Gale Directory of Publications and Broadcast Media, the U.S. Regional Publications Directory published by Bradley Communications, and other library sources. State and regional magazines, which often are listed along with city magazines in these directories, were eliminated from the study since a number of the questions deal specifically with cities and their needs. The questionnaire, which is comprised mostly of multiple choice questions, was mailed along with a short cover letter and a stamped, self-addressed return envelope earlier this year. Several weeks after the first mailing a similar mailing was sent to those that had not responded, and several weeks after that a third mailing was sent to those that still had not responded. Usable responses were received from 56 magazines or 76% of the total. This percentage compares favorably with the 58.5% response to the original study in the late 1970s.

All sections of the country have city magazines, and all are adequately represented in the survey. The largest number of city magazines is in the South, 20; it is followed closely by the West, 19, and the Midwest, 18; The East has 12 and the Southwest 5.(16) The percentage of magazines from each section that responded is as follows: South, 85%; East, 75%; West, 74%; Midwest, 72%, and Southwest, 60%. Half of the responding magazines have circulations ranging from 20,000 through 50,000, but the overall figures vary greatly. Responses were received from large magazines such as New York, 435,000; Los Angeles,

174,000; and The Washingtonian, 160,480, and from small magazines such as Greenwich (CT), 6,500; Athens (GA), 6,000; and Columbia (SC), 5,000. To facilitate comparisons with the results obtained in the original survey and help identify trends, this study will consider a number of the topics discussed then, including the potential of city magazines to provide alternatives to newspapers in covering and commenting on public issues. It will report on basic data about ownership, publication, and distribution; the roles editors have defined for their magazines; magazine content; coverage of issues; possible influence on issues; and possible trends in the field. In addition, the magazines have been divided by circulation into three approximately equal groups to see if size makes any signficant difference in their approach to some of the questions raised. These categories are large, 50,000 and over; medium, 21,000 to 45,000; and small, 20,000 and under.

Results

Basic data. The trend toward private ownership of city magazines indicated in the 1979 study was confirmed. A large majority (89%) of the city magazines are privately owned today; only 5% are operated by chambers of commerce and only 4% are run by non-profit organizations; 2% did not answer the question. In 1979, three-fourths of the magazines were privately owned in a reversal from the 1960s when many were operated by chambers of commerce.

Almost two-thirds (64%) of the city magazines are published monthly. A fifth (20%) are published bimonthly; 7% are published quarterly, and 5% weekly. Two magazines publish 10 issues a year.

Most of the magazines rely on subscriptions more than single copy sales to distribute their products; 18% distribute more than 90% of their magazines through subscriptions; 34% distribute more than 80% through subscriptions, and 43% distribute at least 70% in that way.

Perceived Roles. Editors in 1993 have similar views to those expressed by editors in the late 1970s regarding the roles and functions of city magazines. Most of them (93%) cited providing information about living in the city and lifestyles and providing information about food, travel, and entertainment as important functions. Almost as many (82%) cited pointing out community needs as an important function. In the 1979 study, 95% and 97%, respectively, cited the first two and 87% cited the third. (See Table 1.)

Slightly more than half (54%), almost the same percentage as in 1979 (53%), cited providing an alternative viewpoint to that of the local newspaper as an important function of city magazines. However, only 9% cited it as the most important function as compared with 41% who cited providing information about living in the city and lifestyles as most important.

Magazines in the middle circulation group were somewhat more likely to cite this as an important role; 60% did as compared with 50% for each of the other two groups.

The percentage citing the promotion of local business, including tourism, as an important function dropped from 57% in 1979 to 39% in 1992. Another 7% in 1993 did alter the question to indicate that they provide information about business and tourism but do not necessarily promote it.

More than a fourth in both 1993 and 1979 cited various other functions as important. These functions ranged from investigative journalism, to reenforcing community image and pride, to providing profiles on leading personalities in the community. One editor suggested as an important function providing a survival guide to help readers deal with the impact of recent Republican and Democratic administrations.

More than three-fourths of the editors said they "strongly agree" (27%) or "agree" (52%) with the statement that city magazines are written and edited primarily for persons who are well-educated, upper middle class, and most often white. Only 9% said they "disagree" (5%) or "strongly disagree" (4%) with that statement; 7% said they did not know, and 5% did not answer. Most of the respondents to the earlier survey agreed with this assertion. (See Table 9.)

Moreover, more than half of the editors said they "strongly agree" (11%) or "agree" (46%) with the statement that most city magazines can best be described as attractive urban service and

entertainment guides. Only a fourth said they "disagree" (23%) or "strongly disagree" (2%) with the statement; 13% said they did not know, and 5% did not answer. (See Table 10.) The smaller and larger circulation groups were more likely to agree to this than the middle group; 68% in the smaller group and 56% in the larger one did while only 44% of those in the middle group did.

Content. City magazines use a wide variety of editorial materials. The most popular are personality sketches and letters to the editor, each used by 91% of the magazines. More than three-fourths use feature pictures, an editor's column, lists of activities and interviews as such, and almost three-fourths use narrative articles. Smaller percentages use news stories, news pictures, issue-oriented pictures, how-to articles, cartoons, columns, and special features such as arts criticism, food and restaurant information, media coverage, home features, health information, fiction and poetry. (See Table 2.)

Not surprisingly, entertainment, food, and lifestyles, all used by at least five-sixths of the magazines, headed the list of topics that the editors said they deal with regularly. Other frequent topics include business, tourism-travel, history, health, sports, politics, home and gardening, gossip, arts, books, architecture, environment, education, dining, and social problems.

Editors were divided as to whether most city magazines do a good job of assisting readers with concerns such as self-improvement, education, housing, traffic, and taxes. Two-fifths

"strongly agree" (4%) or "agree" (36%) with the assertion; but 25% "disagree" and 32% said they did not know; 3% did not answer the question. (See Table 10.)

Coverage of Issues. More than four-fifths of the magazines said they often (59%) or occasionally (23%) provide information on local issues such as government, education, and crime. Only 9% said they never do; 7% said they seldom do so, and 2% did not answer the question. (See Table 3.) Magazines in the two larger circulation groups are more likely to provide this information "often" while those in the smaller group are more likely to provide it "occasionally." It breaks down this way: small circulation group, 36% often and 45% occasionally; medium group, 69% often and 14% occasionally, and larger group, 69% often and 19% occasionally. Three-fifths of the respondents in 1979 said they provided in-depth articles on local issues "often" and 26% said they did so occasionally. (See Table 3.)

Business, cited by 93%, and education, cited by 91%, headed the list of areas in which the magazines said they had provided information on issues in the past year. Crime, cited by 79%; the environment, 75%; and social programs, 68%, were close behind. Others mentioned included transportation, government reform, planning/zoning, human rights, traffic, politics, hunger, area changes, children, sexual harassment, taxes, arts and finance. (See Table 4.)

Almost half (45%) of the magazines indicated that they devote between 10% and 20% of their editorial content to

reporting and commenting on public affairs. Only 16% indicated that they devote as much as half of their editorial content to those areas. Almost as many, 13%, said they devote less than 10% of their space to issues. Almost two-thirds (63%) of the larger magazines and 55% of the smaller ones can be grouped in the 10% to 20% range. The medium-sized magazines are more spread out with the largest cluster being 33% between 30% and 40% of their content devoted to public affairs; 28% of them fall in the 10% to 20% range.

Almost three-fifths of the editors said they "strongly agree" (13%) or agree (46%) that city magazines often use hard-hitting articles that provide much new information about pertinent local issues. Almost a third said they "disagree (29%) or "strongly disagree" (2%) with this contention; 5% said they don't know, and 5% did not answer. Four-fifths of the respondents in 1979 expressed agreement. (See Table 9.) More than two-thirds of the smaller circulation magazines, 68%, and larger circulation magazines, 69%, agree or strongly agree with this statement, but only 44% of those in the medium circulation group do.

At the same time, almost half (45%) of the editors said they "strongly agree" (13%) or "agree" (32%) that with the exception of a few magazines, city magazines avoid controversial issues that might upset members of the local power structure. More than a fourth (30%) said they "disagree" (25%) or "strongly disagree"

(5%) with this contention; 21% said they did not know, and 4% did not answer. Almost two-thirds of the respondents in 1979 were in agreement. (See Table 9.)

Influence on Issues. More than half of the editors (57%) said they believe their coverage of local issues has had influence on their readers. Only 2% said they did not think so. Many said they did not know (34%) or did not answer the question (7%). Three-fourths of the editors in the 1979 study said they believed their overall coverage of local issues had had an influence on their readers. (See Table 5.)

Most of the editors said their magazines take stands on local issues through editorials, columns, or other labeled commentary. Almost three-fifths said they do so often (32%) or occasionally (27%). Only 18% said they never do take such stands. Slightly more than that (23%) said they seldom do. Only 13% of the respondents in 1979 said they often took editorial stands; 34% said they never did. (See Table 6.)

The smaller circulation magazines are more likely to take stands than the larger ones. More than two-thirds of the smaller magazines do so "often" (32%) or "occasionally" (36%), and more than three-fifths of the medium circulation magazines do so "often" (39%) or "occasionally" (22%) as compared with less than half of the larger circulation magazines that do so "often (25%) or "occasionally" (19%).

Almost two-thirds of the editors said they feel "very free" (43%) or "free" (23%) to comment on issues. Almost a third said

they feel "some hesitance" (18%) or "very hesitant" (12%) to comment; 4% did not answer. A slightly higher percentage said in the 1979 study that felt "very free" (46%) or "free" (27%) to tackle controversial issues; 22% said they had "some hesitance" and 5% said they were "very hesitant." (See Table 7.)

The smaller circulation magazines indicated they feel more freedom to comment than those in the large circulation group. More than two-thirds in the small circulation group said they felt "very free" (45%) or "free" (23%) to comment, and more than two-thirds in the medium circulation group said they feel "very free" (44%) or "free" (22%) to comment whereas only half of those in the large circulation group said they felt "very free" (31%) or "free" (19%) to comment.

More than half of the editors said they believe their commentary on issues has influence. Only 2% said they do not think it does. Almost a third said they don't know. In 1979, 27%, said their commentary had influence, 14% said it did not, and 59% said they didn't know. (See Table 8.)

Several editors cited their letters as evidence of their influence on readers. Some listed specific instances in which they think they may have prompted government or citizen action. For instance, one editor said an editorial feature on problems created by the Wetlands Commission in pursing its regulatory mandate had prompted the mayor to call a public forum and appoint an independent committee to investigate the question. Another editor cited the passage of a very controversial school levy the

magazine had supported, and another suggested its commentary may have prompted needed changes in a local public television station.

Three-fourths of the editors "strongly agree" (20%) or "agree" (55%) with the assertion that city magazines can and should run more articles and editorials about local issues because their readers can exert influence in the community. Only 11% "disagree (9%) or "strongly disagree" (2%) with this assertion; 7% said they did not know, and 7% did not answer the question. (See Table 10.) The circulation of the magazine did not appear to make much difference in this question except that the editors in the larger circulation group were more likely to "strongly agree." An even higher percentage (85%) said in the 1979 study that they "strongly agree" (34%) or agree (51%) that city magazines should run more articles on issues.

At the same time, more than half "strongly agree (13%) or "agree" (43%) with the assertion that city magazines might do more in-depth exposes on local issues, but they have found that most readers would rather read about people, lifestyles, entertainment, food, travel, and sex. A fourth (25%) disagreed with this contention; 12% said they do not know, and 7% did not answer. (See Table 9.) More than two-thirds of the respondents in 1979 agreed with this contention.

Possible Trends. Editors identified several possible trends in the 1990s. Most (82%) cited extensive use of free-lance articles as a trend. More than half cited the fact that city

magazines are being published in smaller cities than in the past and that they are providing in-depth coverage of local issues and self-help information for readers. More than a third cited providing an alternative viewpoint to that of the local newspaper(s) and the use of editorials to address local issues. Smaller percentages cited the increasing acquisition of city magazines by large media concerns and increasing ownership of city magazines by local newspapers. Providing in-depth coverage of local issues and using editorials to address local issues were both mentioned in 1979. (See Table 11.)

Many might also agree with the contention of one editor that universal trends are difficult to identify and confirm because the city magazines vary so greatly -- "from chamber puff rags to aggressive, hip urban journals, and everything in between."

Summary and Conclusions

1. City magazines are a diverse group of publications that serve many functions, but they are similar in areas such as form of ownership, circulation frequency, sources of revenue, and overall approach to content. Almost 90% are privately owned, almost two-thirds are published monthly, and virtually all depend on circulation and advertising for revenues. More than 90% use personality sketches and letters to the editor, and more than 80% use feature pictures, lists of activities, and an editor's column.

2. City magazines have continued to emphasize some of the same major functions in the 1990s as they did in the late 1970s.

More than 90% still provide information about living in the city, lifestyles, food, travel, and entertainment, and more than 80% still point out community problems and needs. More than half still seek to provide an alternative viewpoint to that of the local newspaper, and many still encourage local business and tourism. It should be noted, however, that the percentage that see promotion of business and tourism as an important function of city magazines has fallen below 50%. Editors today are also less likely to agree that city magazines avoid controversial issues that might upset members of the power structure; less than half agreed in 1993 as compared with almost two-thirds who agreed in 1979.

3. Most city magazines could serve as alternatives to local newspapers because they have differing philosophies from the newspapers, they have potential for in-depth reporting, and their generally affluent audiences, if appropriately motivated, could make a difference in the community. Only 22% share the same philosophy as the principal newspaper in the community; in 13% both are middle of the road; in 7% both are liberal, and in 2% both are conservative. The most frequent combinations are middle of the road magazine and liberal newspaper, 21%, and middle of the road magazine and conservative newspaper, 20%. More than half of the magazines identified themselves as middle of the road (55%) rather than liberal (20%) or conservative (9%). The others declined to identify with any of the three. More than half (54%) said their magazines provide an alternative viewpoint

to that of the local newspaper, and 43% identified providing an alternative viewpoint to that of the local newspaper as a trend in the field.

4. Although lifestyle information appears to dominate the pages of many city magazines, many also are providing information about business and local issues such as education, crime, health and the environment. More than 90% said they had provided business information in the previous year; more than half said they often provide information about local issues, and almost a fourth said they occasionally do so. Almost half indicated that 10% to 20% of their editorial content is devoted to reporting and commenting on local needs and issues.

5. Some of the magazines are providing benchmarks for their readers and exercising civic leadership by taking stands on issues. Almost a third said they often take stands on local issues through editorials, columns, or other labeled commentary; slightly more than a fourth said they do so occasionally. More than half said they believe their commentary has influence on readers. While only 9% said they believe it has "much influence," only 2% said they don't believe it has any influence. About 40% said they did not know or did not answer.

6. Editors may feel that their own publications have broader representation, but almost four-fifths agreed with the statement that city magazines are written primarily for persons who are well-educated, upper middle class, and most often white.

More than half agreed that city magazines could best be described as attractive urban service and entertainment guides.

7. The division of the magazines into three circulation groups produced some interesting findings. For example, the editors of the two smaller magazine groups said they feel more freedom to comment on issues and are more likely to take stands on them. More than two-thirds of those in the smaller circulation groups but only half of those in the large circulation group said they feel very free or free to comment on issues. More than two-thirds of the small circulation group and more than three-fifths of the medium circulation group but less than half of the large circulation group said they often or occasionally take stands on issues.

8. Magazines in the middle circulation group are more likely to see themselves as alternatives to newspapers; 60% do as compared with 50% in each of the other groups. They are less likely to accept the statement that city magazines can best be described as attractive urban service and entertainment guides; only 44% of them agree with the statement as compared with 68% in the small circulation group and 56% in the large circulation group. They are less likely to accept the statement that city magazines often use hard hitting articles that provide information on local issues; only 44% of them agree as compared with 68% in the smaller circulation group and 69% in the larger circulation group. They allocate a higher percentage of

editorial space to reporting and commentary on issues; more of them can be found devoting more than the 10% to 20% of space allocated by most of the magazines.

Notes

1. Ben L. Moon, "City Magazines, Past and Present," Journalism Quarterly, 47:711 (Winter, 1970).

2. For a complete look at population changes, see the U.S. Census Reports for 1960 and 1970. A good summary of the changes discussed here may be found in the "Cities and Urban Affairs" section, Britannica Book of the Year 1969, p. 204.

3. "A Shortcut to Status," Newsweek, September 2, 1968, p. 44.

4. David Shaw, "List Grows: Magazines of the Cities -- a Success Story," Los Angeles Times, April 5, 1976, p. 3.

5. Alan D. Fletcher, "City Magazines Find a Niche in the Media Marketplace," Journalism Quarterly, 54:740-43, 49 (Winter, 1977).

6. Alan D. Fletcher and Bruce G. VandenBergh, "Numbers Grow, Problems Remain for City Magazines," Journalism Quarterly, 59:313-17 (Summer, 1982).

7. Ernest C. Hynds, "City Magazines, Newspapers Serve in Different Ways," Journalism Quarterly, 56: 619-22 (Autumn 1979).

8. John P. Hayes, "City/Regional Magazines: A Survey/Census," Journalism Quarterly, 58:294-96 (Summer, 1981).

9. Sam Riley, "Specialized Magazines of the South," Journalism Quarterly, 59:447-450, 455 (Autumn, 1982).

10. Vicki Hesterman, "Ethical Standards of American Magazines: The Practices and Policies of City and Regional Publications," unpublished dissertation, Ohio University, August, 1988.

11. "Special Report: City & Regional Magazines," Advertising Age, Vol 56, January 17, 1985, pp. 11ff.

12. Heidi Schultz, "City & regionals: Building strength," Folio, Vol. 21, No. 8, pp 57-59 (August 1992).

13. Susan Hovey, "The lure of LA-LA land," Folio, Vol. 19, No. 9, pp. 50-52 (September 1990).

14. Liz Horton, "Two against one in Texas," Folio, Vol 19, No. 11, pp.81, 83.

15. James Warren, "A lot of crust: In a city this lively, Chicago's magazines are inexcusably stale," Chicago Tribune, July 18, 1989, Section 5, pp. 1-3; Chris Storch, "Chicago Times at 2: Searching for an identity," Chicago Tribune, August 21, 1988, Section 7, pp. 1-2; Chris Storch, "The Chicago magazine story," Chicago Tribune, January 18, 1987, Section 7, pp. 1,9; James Warren, "The meaty Chicago Times makes for a freshing debut," Chicago Tribune, August 26, 1987, Section 5, p. 2.

16. The regions and the states included in them are as follows: East: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and the District of Columbia; South: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia; Midwest: Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Ohio, and Wisconsin; Southwest: Arksansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas; West: Alaska, Arizona, California,Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming.

Table 1

Percentage of Magazines That Believe The Functions Stated Are Important

	1979	1993
Provide information about living in city, lifestyles	95%	93%
Provide information about food, travel, entertainment	97	93
Point out community problems, needs	87	82
Provide alternative viewpoint to that of local newspaper	53	54
Promote local business, tourism	55	39*

*An additional 7% said they report on these but do not promote them.

Table 2

Percentage of Magazines Using Various Types of Content

Personality Sketches	91%	Editorials	38%
Interviews as Such	77	Cartoons	30
How-to Articles	38	Editor's Column	80
Narrative articles	73	Advice Column(s)	7
News stories	48	Letters to the Editor	91
News pictures	32	Lists of Activities	80
Feature pictures	86	*Other	25
Issue-oriented pictures	48		

*Other editorial materials mentioned at least once include guest editorials, essays, reviews, fiction, poetry, recipes, and jokes.

Table 3

Percentage of Magazines That Provide Information on Local Issues such as Government, Education and Crime.*

Often	59%
Occasionally	23
Seldom	7
Never	9
No Answer	2

* - 60% of the respondents in 1979 said they provide in-depth articles on local issues "often"; 26% said they did so "occasionally"; 8% said they did so "seldom" and 3% said they never provided such articles; 3% didn't answer.

Table 4

Percentage of Magazines That Have Provided Information on the Local Issues Listed in the Year Prior to Survey.

Business	93%	Transportation	52%
Education	91	Government Reform	41
Health	88	Planning/Zoning	41
Crime	79	Human Rights	34
Environment	75	Traffic	32
Social programs	68	*Other	11

* -- Other items mentioned at least once included politics, hunger, area changes, children, sexual harassment, gay power, taxes, arts, and finances.

Table 5

Percentage of Magazines That Believe Their Coverage Of Local Issues Has Influence on Their Readers*

Much Influence	9%
Considerable Influence	23
Limited Influence	25
No Influence	2
Don't Know	34
Didn't Answer	7

* - 76% of respondents in 1979 said they believed that their overall coverage of local issues had an influence on readers; 13% said it did not; 11% did not express an opinion.

Table 6

Percentage of Magazines That Take Stands Through Editorials, Columns, or Other Labeled Commentary on Local Issues*

Often	32%
Occasionally	27
Seldom	23
Never	18

* - 13% of the respondents in 1979 said they took editorial stands "often"; 24% said they did so occasionally; 26% said they did so "seldom," and 34% said they did not take editorial stands; 3% did not answer.

Table 7

Percentage of Magazine Editors Who Said They Feel Free to Comment on Local Issues

	1979	1993
Very Free	45%	43%
Free	26	23
Some Hesitance	21	18
Very Hesitant	5	12
No Answer	3	4

Table 8

Percentage of Magazines That Say Their Editorials, Columns, and Other Labeled Commentary on Local Issues Have Influence.*

Much Influence	5%
Considerable Influence	14
Limited Influence	38
No Influence	2
Don't Know	30
No Answer	11

* - 27% of the respondents in 1979 said they believed their editorials had influenced readers; 14% said they had not; 59% did not answer.

Table 9

Percentage of Agreement with the Statements Listed

City magazines are written and edited primarily for persons who are well educated, upper middle class, and most often white.

	1979	1993		1979	1993
Strongly Agree	39%	27%	Disagree	0	5%
Agree	58	52	Strongly Disagree	0	4
Don't Know	0	7	No Answer	3	5

City magazines often use hard-hitting articles that provide much new information about pertinent local issues.

	1979	1993		1979	1993
Strongly Agree	32%	13%	Disagree	13%	29%
Agree	50	46	Strongly Disagree	3	2
Don't Know	0	5	No Answer	2	5

City magazines might do more in-depth exposes on local issues, but they have found that most readers would rather read about people, lifestyles, entertainment, food, travel, and sex.

	1979	1993		1979	1993
Strongly Agree	13%	13%	Disagree	19	25%
Agree	55	43	Strongly Disagree	8	0
Don't Know	0	12	No Answer	5	7

With the exception of a few magazines, city magazines avoid controversial issues that might upset members of the local power structure.

	1979	1993		1979	1993
Strongly Agree	16%	13%	Disagree	29%	25%
Agree	47	32	Strongly Disagree	5	5
Don't Know	0	21	No Answer	3	4

Table 10

Percentage of Agreement with the Statements Listed

City magazines can and should run more articles and editorials about local issues because their readers can exert influence in the community.

Strongly Agree	20%	Disagree	9%
Agree	55	Strongly Disagree	2
Don't Know	7	No Answer	7

Most city magazines can best be described as attractive urban service and entertainment guides.

Strongly Agree	11%	Disagree	23%
Agree	46	Strongly Disagree	2
Don't Know	13	No Answer	5

Most city magazines do a good job of assisting readers with concerns such as self-improvement, education, housing, traffic, and taxes.

Strongly Agree	4%	Disagree	25%
Agree	36	Strongly Disagree	0
Don't Know	32	No Answer	3

Table 11

Percentage of Magazines That Agree These Statements Represent Trends in City Magazines Today

They are making extensive use of freelance articles.	82%
They are serving smaller cities than in the past.	55
They are providing in-depth coverage of local issues.	54*
They are providing extensive self-help information.	50
They are providing an alternative viewpoint to that of the local newspaper.	43
They are using editorials to address local issues.	36**
They are increasingly being acquired by large media concerns.	23
They are increasingly being owned by local newspapers.	9

* - 79% cited this as a trend in 1979.
** - 16% cited this as a trend in 1979.

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Magazine Coverage of Self-Help Groups from July 1982 to July 1992: A Content Analysis

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When a person is feeling angry, helpless, depressed or otherwise upset, he or she has a number of options for dealing with those emotions: prayer, talking to one's friends or family, reaching out to members of one's community, asking for professional assistance, or seeking self-help.[1] In recent years, particularly during the 1980s, this latter category experienced a tremendous surge in popularity as a way of coping with one's problems. Self-help became so popular that by 1990, some 15 million Americans were attending approximately 500,000 self-help support groups during any given week.[2]

As the self-help/12-step movement expanded and surged in popularity in the last decade, it was covered extensively in magazines. It was the author's perception prior to conducting this study that many of those articles initially spoke favorably of self-help, but that recent articles were more critical of the movement.

This content analysis, therefore, sought to determine trends in the way the self-help movement was covered by magazines over the last 10 years. A random sampling of 44 articles written between July 1982 and July 1992 was analyzed to determine whether self-help groups were perceived positively, negatively or neutrally by magazines, and to determine whether that trend became more positive, negative or neutral over the last 10 years.

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[1] Thomas J. Powell, *Working With Self-Help* (Silver Spring, Maryland: National Association of Social Workers Press, 1990), p. 32.

[2] Charles Leerhsen, "Unite and Conquer," *Newsweek* 115 (February 5, 1990), p. 50.

This study was considered significant and timely because it attempted to quantify media coverage of a social movement that affects millions of Americans. If the study indeed showed that self-help groups have come under fire from the media, that trend toward negative coverage could cause participants to question the benefits of a movement that has become an intimate part of their lives. It is therefore possible that such coverage could play a significant role in prompting sweeping sociological changes nationwide.

To understand the self-help movement and why its attendant support groups became popular in the last 10 years, it is first necessary to examine its origins. To begin with, the concept of helping oneself by seeking counsel from others is not new. "Mankind learned early on that survival of the clan, village or colony depended on the members working cooperatively to provide food and protection against common enemies. Throughout the centuries, mutual aid has been provided by a variety of organizations, such as the guilds of medieval times, the 'Friendly Societies' that developed out of the Industrial Revolution in England, the grange movement of rural America, and churches."[3]

Similarly, the philosophy of self-help – relying on oneself instead of others to improve one's life – is also steeped in tradition. Back in Victorian times, Samuel Smiles – Britain's so-called "prophet of honest toil" – espoused the philosophy in his 1859 book *Self-Help*.[4] The self-help philosophy endured into this century, and gained popular acceptance with the publication of books such as Dale Carnegie's

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[3] Annabel Hecht, "Support Groups: When Going It Alone Is Going Nowhere," *FDA Consumer* (April 1986), p. 29.

[4] Asa Briggs, "Samuel Smiles: The Gospel of Self-Help," *History Today* 37 (May 1987), p. 40.

How to Win Friends and Influence People in 1936 and Norman Vincent Peale's *The Power of Positive Thinking* in 1955.[5]

However, modern-day support groups – a blending of mutual aid and self-help philosophies that are traditionally defined as "being composed of members who share a common condition, situation, heritage, symptom or experience" – date back to 1935.[6] That year marks the founding of Alcoholics Anonymous by two heavy drinkers, one a physician and the other a businessman. The philosophy of Alcoholics Anonymous, also known as "AA," was that alcoholics could prevent themselves from drinking if they met frequently with other alcoholics who were also trying to remain sober.[7] At the heart of the plan was a "12-step" recovery model with an emphasis on accepting powerlessness over one's addiction, on the theory that "alcohol and other 'addictions' are biologically rooted, and the biological basis cannot be overcome and should not be denied."[8]

The 12-step model also espoused the idea of spiritual growth and turning one's life over to a "higher power" as an antidote to unhealthy and obsessive efforts to control pain and anxiety. Furthermore, 12-step proponents claimed that "admitting their powerlessness over the 'disease' can empower 12-steppers to do something about themselves. Self-help groups allowed participants to say, 'Recovery starts now: I am not responsible for being an alcoholic, but I am responsible for my recovery from alcoholism.'"[9]

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[5] Ibid., p. 40.

[6] Morton A. Lieberman, Leonard D. Borman and Associates, *Self-Help Groups for Coping With Crisis; Origins, Members, Processes and Impact* (San Francisco: Josse-Bass Publishers, 1979), p. 2.

[7] "Unite and Conquer," p. 53.

[8] Frank Riessman, "The New Self-Help Backlash," *Social Policy* 20 (Summer 1990), p. 43.

[9] Ibid., p. 43.

Other self-help groups soon developed using the 12-step model, among them Al-Anon (for families of alcoholics) in the 1940s and Narcotics Anonymous (for drug users) in the 1950s. However, self-help groups did not become widespread in American society until the 1980s. Between 1983 and 1987, about 11 new 12-step groups were formed each year, compared to roughly 1.5 new groups a year between 1950 and 1983.[10] Even more significantly, the 500,000 support groups said to exist by 1990 represented a quadrupling over the previous 10 years.[11] Self-help was seen as an increasingly common way for people to deal with the stresses of modern living, in their quest for "some anchor of stability, of connection, of faith . . . (at a time of) the depersonalization and dehumanization of institutions and social life."[12]

The range of self-help groups that has evolved is enormous and varied. A partial list includes Children of Aging Parents, Depression After Delivery (for sufferers of postpartum depression) and Wives of Older Men.[13] Categories of self-help groups include those dealing with behavior change (such as Kleptomaniacs Anonymous and Women Who Love Too Much), specific health conditions (Living With Cancer and the International Endometriosis Association), traumatic events (Incest Survivors and Widow-to-Widow), and family and friends of people with problems (Families of Persons with AIDS and Adult Children of Alcoholics).[14] While 12-step groups have remained apolitical, other self-help groups that do work

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[10] *Working With Self-Help*, p. 93.

[11] "Unite and Conquer," p. 50.

[12] Alfred H. Katz and Eugene I. Bender, *The Strength Within Us: Self-Help Groups in the Modern World* (New York: New Viewpoints, 1976), p. 3.

[13] Lisa Belasco, "Groups to Help Women Through Hard Times," *Good Housekeeping* 212 (February 1991), p. 245.

[14] Gregg Levoy, "A Place to Belong," *Health* 21 (February 1989), p. 54.

toward social change, such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving and Families of the Mentally Ill, have also sprouted.[15]

Literature Review

A review of other content analyses revealed no previous studies of how self-help groups were perceived by the media. However, the self-help movement has been the subject of several other content analysis studies. A 1981 study by Francine Lavoie focused on the preventative potential of self-help groups by recording the verbal interactions of three self-help groups and subjecting those interactions to content analysis.[16] Another study, conducted by Marilyn Coleman in 1985, analyzed self-help books as part of a review of popular literature that identified stepfamily strengths.[17]

Also identified were several content analyses which used sentences as a unit of analysis – the same unit of analysis to be used in this study – and which were conducted to determine the tone and/or bias of media reports of other issues. A 1991 study by Atwater and Anokwa analyzed statements that dealt with race relations between blacks and whites in feature stories in *Ebony* magazine; those statements were found to be mostly unbiased and neutral in tone.[18] In addition, a

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15 Frank Riessman, "Self-Help Reporter; The Relationship of 12-Steppers to the Self-Help Movement, " *Social Policy* (Winter 1990), p. 63.

16 Francine Lavoie, "Processes Analysis in Self-Help Groups: Development and Applications," presented at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association, Los Angeles, 1981.

17 Marilyn Coleman, "Stepfamily Strengths: a Review of Popular Literature," *Family Relations*, 34:583-89 (1985).

18 Tony Atwater and Kwadwo Anokwa, "Race Relations in 'Ebony': An Analysis of Interracial Statements in Selected Feature Stories," *Journal of Black Studies* 21 (March1991), p. 277.

1985 study in which sentences were the unit of analysis was conducted by Dennis T. Lowry, who studied 75 network television newscasts for possible political bias.[19]

Hypothesis

Self-help groups became popular in the 1980s, at a time in modern life when family structures were breaking down and when people, feeling a sense of isolation and powerlessness, were "seeking anchors of stability, connection and faith, things which they used to get (from) family, peers, like-minded people."[20] In addition to filling the gap in traditional support systems, self-help groups also allowed people to express deep-seated and long-suppressed emotions, provided safety in numbers, were a cost-free alternative to traditional therapy, and were attended by people who could empathize with a person's particular problem.[21]

However timely the movement's growth may have been, though, its very growth appears to have also planted the seeds for criticism. Two complaints were that the basic issue of self-help had become obscured by "an endless supply of tangential issues"[22] and that the movement tended "to call any bad habit or problematic behavior an addiction."[23] Wendy Kaminer, a critic of the self-help movement and author of the book *I'm Dysfunctional, You're Dysfunctional,* said in a magazine interview that many self-help groups strip members of their personal power by telling them to abdicate responsibility for their actions. "One of the first

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[19] Dennis T. Lowry, "Measures of Network TV News Bias in Campaign '84, or 'Should Jesse Helms Become Dan Rather's Boss?'", paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Memphis, August 1985.

[20] *The Strength in Us: Self-Help Groups in the Modern World*, p. 4.

[21] *A Place to Belong,* p. 54.

[22] Michael Brennan, "Self-Indulgent Self-Help," *Newsweek* (January 20, 1992), p. 8.

[23] Sue Avery Brown, "Dissing 'Dysfunctional'," *People* (June 22, 1992), p. 57.

things you do in a 12-step program is surrender your will and submit to a higher power," Kaminer said.[24]

The self-help movement's surge in popularity during the 1980s appeared to be matched by a surge in media attention. Based on the author's knowledge of the content of popular magazines in the last decade, that attention was largely positive until the late 1980s, when the pendulum began to swing the other way and media criticism of the movement started to appear more and more.

Therefore, the hypothesis of this study was that magazine coverage of the self-help movement was largely favorable in the early- to mid-1980s, but became more negative in the late 1980s and early 1990s as the self-help trend leveled – and possibly declined – in popularity.

Methodology

The study was conducted by analyzing 44 articles about the self-help movement. Articles were found by conducting a CD Search of the Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature for magazine stories about the movement written between July 1982 and July 1992. The 10-year time frame encompassed the years when self-help groups appeared to have multiplied the most, been at their most popular, and then come under attack from critics.

Articles were located using a key-word search of the phrases "self-help groups," "self-help movement," and "12-step programs." The search revealed 59 articles about self-help groups from which it was determined that 44 articles would be coded. (It was the author's belief that 44 articles constituted a representative sampling of total articles about the general self-help movement.) The study

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[24] Ibid., p. 58.

excluded coverage of specific self-help groups, such as those for bereaved parents or people trying to refrain from drug use, and included only articles about the self-help movement in general. Specific groups were excluded because the author believed that they might have received different coverage from the general movement, and would have detracted from the intent of this study, which was to focus on the overall concept of self-help.

Articles were randomly selected by writing all titles found in the Reader's Guide on separate pieces of paper. All pieces were placed in a hat and picked one by one until 44 titles were chosen. Random sampling was assured by replacing each piece of paper in the hat after it had been picked. A total of 30 magazines were used in the study (see Appendix A).

For each article, a coding sheet contained the following information: the number of the article and its title; the tone of the title (positive, negative or neutral) toward self-help groups; the type of article (feature, commentary, profile, straight news or book review); the year the article was published; the name of the magazine in which the article appeared; the category for which each sentence was coded; and the tone of each sentence (positive, negative or neutral).

Each article was coded by using the sentence as the unit of analysis. For a given article, a sentence was assigned one of five categories: movement, participants, leaders, books, or other. (See Appendix B for description of categories under "Operational Definitions.") If the sentence was determined to belong to one of those first four categories, it was coded as being positive, negative or neutral in tone. If the sentence was found to belong to the "other" category, it was assigned to that category but was not coded for tone. (The author originally planned to code the "other" category for tone as well, and set up the coding sheet accordingly. However,

as coding proceeded it was determined that such a distinction was unnecessary. Therefore, all sentences that fell into the "other" category were listed as such, but were not labeled by tone.) Each sentence had a value of one, although that value was split in half if the sentence contained two topics and/or reflected two different tones. Once coding was completed, values within each category were totaled, and categories containing half numbers were rounded up to the next whole number.

The author of the study coded all articles. Coder reliability was found to be 80 percent by comparing results of the author's coding of two articles with coding of those same articles by a professor and two classmates. This method was a variation of the "equivalent forms" method of coding in which "equivalent forms of the same test are given to the same individual under comparable conditions at two different times."[25] (See Appendix C for an example of the author's coding sheet and two examples of articles coded for the study.)

Significance of Expected Findings

Any social phenomenon that claims to have 15 million participants is significant, and the self-help movement is no exception. If a noticeably negative trend in magazine coverage of the subject were to be found, it would be worth considering the implications of a movement that to its critics had fallen short of its goal of helping people. Such a trend might prompt sociologists to examine trends in the self-help movement, which in turn would be helpful in assessing the validity or drawbacks of such a widespread social phenomenon.

One way in which the self-help movement is reportedly flawed is in the political passivity it spawns. Writer Elayne Rapping said that modern-day self-help

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[25] Guido H. Stempel III, "Increasing Reliability in Content Analysis," *Journalism Quarterly*, 32:449 (Fall 1955).

books and their message "present addiction as a disease from which one never fully recovers, which only the most vigilant and permanent adherence to the Twelve-Step program . . . can control."[26] Rapping lamented that 12-step programs don't prompt people to transform social problems that cause dysfunctional behavior, saying that for 12-step adherents, "the passivity, the giving up of one's sense of personal agency, is the antithesis of any belief in the power of political action."[27]

A second concern about self-help groups -- particularly the 12-step variety -- has been that they create an addiction to the group itself.[28] This concern has been downplayed by proponents of the movement, one of whom said that "involvement, even dependence, on such groups need not be addicting, nor perceived negatively. Rather, it may be seen as a way for individuals to become less isolated, to increase their connection to others, and to find a positive source for growth and reinforcement."[29]

Negative criticism of the movement has also raised the question of whether society is becoming "addicted to addictions. . . . The notion of personal responsibility for our failings is passé. We don't talk about shoring up our value system (anymore). We merely applaud the strength of people who attempt to overcome diseases."[30]

Besides the sociological implications of negative coverage of the self-help movement, it is important to note how large-scale social trends are being reported

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[26] Elayne Rapping, "Hooked on a Feeling," *The Nation* (March 5, 1990), p. 317.

[27] Ibid., p. 318.

[28] Frank Riessman, "Activists Anonymous?," *New York Newsday* (October 12, 1990).

[29] "The New Self-Help Backlash," p. 44.

[30] Maureen Dowd, "Addiction Chic," *Mademoiselle* 95 (October 1989), p. 216.

by the press, because many people are made aware of these trends only through the media. In discussing the agenda-setting function of the press, mass communication researchers Shearon A. Lowery and Melvin DeFleur have said that ". . . there is a constant flow of information from the press to its audience. . . . That information, selective or distorted as it may be, provides the most basic source for millions of people about what is taking place in their society."[31] That theory is reflected further in a statement made by Bernard Cohen, who in 1963 wrote, "The press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about."[32]

Findings

Data analysis supported the hypothesis that magazine coverage of the self-help movement was largely favorable in the early- to mid-1980s, but became more negative in the late 1980s and early 1990s. In the early and mid 1980s, 64% of the sentences were favorable, but from 1988 to 1992, only 46% were positive. ($x^2 = 43.29$, $df = 2$, $p < .001$) (See Table 1).

The hypothesis was tested as follows. The study's categories of statements (movement, participants, leaders and books) and the tone of each category (positive, negative or neutral) were collapsed to create three groupings: all positive statements, all negative, and all neutral. Years of publication used in the study were collapsed into two time periods – 1982-87 and 1988-92. A cross-tabulation showed that indeed, there were more positive statements made about the self-help movement during the first time period than there were during the second.

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[31] Shearon A. Lowery and Melvin L. DeFleur, *Milestones in Mass Communication Research*, 2nd ed. (White Plains, N.Y.: Longman Inc.,1988), p. 328.

[32] Bernard Cohen, *The Press and Foreign Policy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 13.

It is worth noting that of the 44 articles coded, only eight (18.2%) were published between 1983 and 1987, while the vast majority – 36, or 81.8% – were published between 1988 and 1992 (See Appendix D). This preponderance of stories in the latter half of the study period could indicate a significant interest on the part of publications about the self-help movement during that time.

Other information gathered in the study included the tone of titles, with 20 (45.5%) positive in tone, 11 (25.0%) negative in tone, and 13 (29.5%) neutral in tone. Of the five types of articles coded, straight news predominated with 15 (34.1%) of the stories, followed by 13 (29.5%) commentary/analysis pieces, seven (15.9%) feature/anecdotal stories, five (11.4%) profiles, and four (9.1%) book reviews. Using Fisher's exact probability test, this is significant at the .05 level.

The hard news category consisted only of straight news, with the other four categories making up soft news. As indicated in Table 2, hard news titles were positive 90% of the time and negative only 10% of the time. By contrast, soft news stories had a nearly equal number of positive and negative titles. This suggested to the author that headlines on straight news stories tended to put a positive slant on the title, perhaps to attract the reader more easily than might be the case with a negative title.

Conclusions

This study, which shows a shift from positive to negative magazine coverage of the self-help movement, could indicate any number of things. It could signify a growing skepticism on the part of the magazine industry toward the movement, or perhaps a decline in popular support for such movements.

Having completed the study, the author believes that many opportunities remain to conduct more research on the subject of magazine (or other media) coverage of the self-help movement. One suggestion is to compare magazine coverage of the self-help movement with coverage in newspapers. Another would be to compare coverage of the general movement with coverage of specific types of self-help groups.

Upon completion of the content analysis, the author remained firmly convinced that studies of media coverage of the self-help movement would be invaluable to the fields of journalism and sociology.

APPENDIX A

Magazines included in study are listed below, along with number of articles coded from each publication:

Adweek's Marketing Week -- 1
American Demographics -- 1
American Health -- 2
Better Homes and Gardens -- 1
Changing Times -- 1
Christian Century -- 1
Essence -- 1
FDA Consumer -- 1
The Futurist -- 2
Good Housekeeping -- 2
Harper's -- 1
Health -- 1
Maclean's -- 1
Mademoiselle -- 1
Ms. -- 1
The Nation -- 2
Newsweek -- 5
New York -- 1
New Yorker -- 1
People Weekly -- 3
Prevention -- 1
Psychology Today -- 1
Publishers Weekly -- 1
Skeptical Inquirer -- 1
Social Policy -- 3
Tikkun -- 1
Time -- 1
U.S. News & World Report -- 2
Utne Reader -- 2
Working Woman -- 1

APPENDIX B

Operational Definitions for Coding Sheet:

*Each sentence was a unit of analysis.

*There were five categories from which to choose for the unit of analysis:

1. MOVEMENT/PHILOSOPHY/GROUPS: Self-help movement, 12-step philosophy, etc.

2. PARTICIPANTS/PEOPLE AFFECTED BY THE SELF-HELP MOVEMENT: Addicts, those recovering from addiction, families of those affected by or involved in the self-help movement, etc.

3. LEADERS: Those active in lecturing or writing about the self-help movement, such as John Bradshaw, Melody Beattie, etc.

4. BOOKS/COMMENTATORS/CRITICS/TELEVISION TALK SHOWS: Publications about the self-help movement, pundits who analyze the self-help philosophy, etc.

5. OTHER: Topics not associated with the above categories, such as anecdotal leads, philosophical asides, etc.

*Choose the main topic of the sentence; this may or may not be the grammatical subject of the sentence.

EXAMPLE: "Peck's friends and co-workers speak of him only in the warmest terms."

PECK (a leader in the self-help movement) is the main topic, and was coded LEADER+.

*A sentence containing a semicolon was coded as one sentence.

*When a portion of the article appeared in quotes, each sentence within the quotes was coded separately.

*If a person was talking about something, the coded unit is the thing being talked about, not the person doing the talking.

EXAMPLE: "Kaminer says the self-help movement is a bunch of baloney." Code the self-help movement (here, MOVEMENT-), not Kaminer.

*Sentences may contain two topics to be coded, and each topic may or may not have a different value. Split the unit of analysis in half if necessary, and assign each half a different value if necessary.

EXAMPLE: "We were ready for some real basic stuff, and the self-help movement gave us that." Code PARTICIPANT 1/2+, MOVEMENT 1/2+.

GUIDELINES FOR VALUES IN CODING:[33]

POSITIVE
1.Referred positively to the strength (strong, powerful), morality (good, honest), or activity (active, energetic) of the individual. For instance, "Self-help groups are multiplying" was coded MOVEMENT+; "The book became a best-seller" was coded BOOKS+.
2.Described a pro-active behavior by someone, even if that person has a negative label attached to them. For instance, "troubled callers" and "people grappling with dependencies" was coded PARTICIPANT+.
3.Showed an increase in size or quantity. For instance, "Self-help meetings have boomed in the last decade" was coded MOVEMENT+. (By contrast, "There are 100 self-help groups" was coded neutrally, as in MOVEMENT 0.)
4.Portrayed a person or thing in a positive way. For instance, "The oracle herself resides in a modest subdivision" was coded LEADER+.
5.Spoke well of a phenomenon or movement. For instance, "This populist alternative rejects the relationship between the weak patient and the superior doctor" was coded MOVEMENT+.

NEGATIVE
1.Referred negatively to a person's strength (weak, indecisive), morality (corrupt, bad, dishonest), or activity (lazy, inactive). For instance, "Bradshaw was drinking to ease the pain" was coded LEADER-. "More than 80 million Americans are emotionally involved with an addict or are addicted themselves" was coded PARTICIPANTS-.

NEUTRAL
1.Didn't give an indication as to strength, morality or activity.
2.Was descriptive but didn't portray people, things or events in either a positive or negative light. For instance, "There are 5 million self-help groups" was coded MOVEMENT 0. "Bradshaw mixes material in his lectures" was coded LEADER 0.

CLASSIFICATION OF TYPES OF ARTICLES

1.FEATURE (ANECDOTAL): Contained personal stories about people, emphasized anecdotes and personal narratives rather than facts about self-help movement.
2.COMMENTARY/ANALYSIS: Opinionated, passed judgment on the self-help movement, frequently written in the first person.
3.PROFILE: Provided an in-depth view of a person's character and activity for the

[33] Guido H. Stempel III, written coding instructions.

reader.

4.STRAIGHT NEWS: Emphasized facts over anecdotes or opinion.

5.BOOK REVIEW: Self-explanatory.

APPENDIX C

Peggy Dillon/Coding Sheet for Journalism 830

Magazine Coverage of Self-Help Programs from July 1982-July 1992: A Content Analysis

1-2 ID# 34

Title/subtitle of article America's addiction to addictions; people are seeking help for everything from promiscuity to excessive shopping

4 Tone of title toward self-help groups ___positive ___negative ___neutral

6 Type of article: ___feature (anecdotal) ___commentary/analysis
___profile ___straight news ___book review

8-9 Year article was published 1990

11-12 Name of magazine U.S. News + World Report

14 Number of column inches ___10-20 ___20-30 ___30-40 ___40-50
___50-60 ___60-70 ___70-80 ___80-90 ___ 90

Rate each sentence as positive, negative or neutral. If a sentence has both positive and negative aspects, split the difference in the appropriate category.

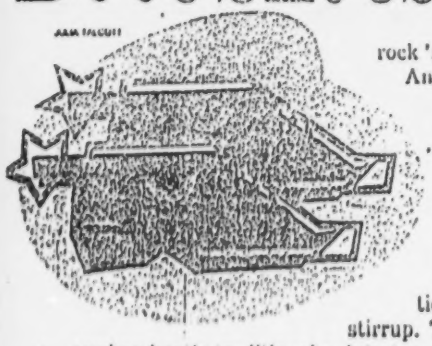
	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Movement/philosophy/ groups	16-18 5½	20-22 9½	24-26 6
Participants/people in general affected by self-help movement	28-30 3½	32-34 6	36-38 ½
Leaders	40-42 2½	44-46 1½	48-50 —
Books/commentators/ critics/TV talk shows	52-54 1	56-58 2	60-62 2
Other	64-66 15	68-70 —	72-74 —

Cowboy Boot Shoes

THEY'RE NOT BOOTS AND THEY'RE NOT SHOES. You wouldn't find a lawyer wearing them, but they're hot and trendy. If you're young and follow fashion you probably already own a pair. They're even kind of Western, but you wouldn't find a real cowboy wearing them.

They're cowboy-boot shoes and "right now they're hot," says Paul Kersch at the upscale Boot Camp store in Los Angeles' Beverly Center. "Guess sells very well. The lizard ones are moving quick."

Though there are men's and women's styles now, "most of the people wearing cowboy-boot shoes are women in their early to late 20s, people with disposable income, working people who keep an eye on trends," says Katherine Turman, who edits a rock 'n' roll magazine in Los Angeles.



Mostly in black or brown, says Turman, sometimes in suede, cowboy-boot shoes have the same thick heel that makes the working cowboy boot so practical for sticking into a stirrup. They always have the cowboy boot's traditional pointy toe.

The phenomenon is not some extension of country chic, say the folks who wear and sell them. It's something else entirely. "It's a logical extreme," says Turman, comparing cowboy-boot shoes to the emergence and demise of very-high-topped athletic shoes, popular a year or so ago.

You're welcome to buy silver boot tips at Western wear shops, but in the Los Angeles area most people buy them at fashion outlets in Hollywood or the San Fernando Valley. You find the same trend in New York and Atlanta, says Kersch. "This is strictly a fashion statement."

Statements usually cost significant cash, at least until they catch on big. Cowboy-boot shoes are already showing up in discount places, and with that comes a price drop.

An emerging trend in cowboy-boot shoes involves slouch socks, say Kersch and Turman. Thick socks with lots of elastic, they're meant to be folded over once or several times so that they droop on the outside of your boot shoes, the way you would never want socks to droop over your tennis shoes.

Turman wears them to work, and wears them home, and wears them out for fun, but although she rides horses, she would never wear them in a stable. And, she says, "a real cowboy wouldn't be caught dead in them because then you-know-what would get inside." —*Joe Fusbinder*

Self-help

WHEN JOHN LACEY'S WIFE LEFT HIM FOR his friend, he joined One-to-One, a singles self-help group. It's a scenario being played out nationwide as an estimated 6.25 million people in the last year were members of, or joined, one of an estimated 250,000 self-help groups.

In Lacey's case, it's just fiction as played by Judd Hirsch on the NBC hit *Dear John*. However, the fact that a popular TV show is built around a self-help group is indicative of how rapidly the phenomenon is becoming mainstream.

In recent times, such groups have become hot "in" spots, often replacing bars and business meetings as a place for professional and social connection, as well as help.

But the rise in groups is more complex than just a growing number of people with problems. "There has been a dissolution of traditional support systems. Families are separated; there are more single families, fewer extended families, less connection with neighbors," says the California Self-Help Center's Carol Eisman. "Self-help groups provide that sense of community."

While the self-help groups remain nonprofit, that is not to say there is no profit in the area. Witness the proliferation of self-help books, as well as video- and audiocassettes. *Co-Dependent No More*, which seems to have a lock on the best-seller list, is rapidly being joined by just about every possible permutation of the co-dependency problem.

And if ever there was an example of niches, self-help is it. The problems the groups address get incredibly specific, ranging from emotional problems (depression to agoraphobia) to violence-related problems (sexual abuse perpetrators to those falsely accused of abuse) to transition/lifestyle problems (aging to cults, prostitution to marriage).

Within a single category, groups take on different personalities—for example, a divorce group for non-smoking women over 40 with grown children, versus one for those under 35 with pre-school kids. Regional 800-numbers help people link up; a national line is due soon.

And the movement is encompassing the "hidden victims," family and friends of those with problems: co-dependency groups are now the fastest growth area.

As the '90s usher in an increasingly complicated society, self-help groups are expected to be a major mechanism to provide consumers with a single service—helping people cope. —*Betsy Sharkey*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

LETTERS TO OUR SHRINK

Tweive-Stepping It

(16)

Gad Horowitz

My companion and I have been together for ten years. We get along very well but we fight regularly, once every few weeks, about nothing, ferociously, no hitting but a lot of verbal pyrotechnics. Every time this happens we forgive each other and get on with life, but we are often depressed about our fighting and what it could mean about our compatibility. Some friends have been trying to persuade us to get involved, as they are, with the Adult Children of Alcoholics movement (ACA). They say that although there has never been any alcoholism in either of our families of origin, our fathers were probably workaholics and our families were probably therefore dysfunctional. They say ACA is the solution for the adult children not only of alcoholics but of all dysfunctional families. What do you suggest?

I see the possibility of a serious error in the way you and your companion have been thinking about your fighting: you seem to be on the point of accepting the assumption that you are fighting *because* your families of origin were "addictive" or "dysfunctional," and that ACA is therefore "the solution"—the only solution. You should know that you have a very large number of options.

First of all, the problem might not be that you have a fight once every few weeks but that you assume that this "means" something about your "compatibility." Lovers will fight, though perhaps less often than many of us do, even in the most gentle and least stressful of societies. I once heard a family therapist define "intimacy" as the need and the ability to seek comfort from the very same people who can hurt you precisely because they are so close to you. Her recommendation would be that you accept compassionately your fighting nature and promise one another never to allow your fighting, or any stupid verbal pyrotechnics you may emit while fighting, to come between you.

The fact that you can forgive one another after each fight is much more important than the fact of your fighting: it shows you are already very close to the remedy I am suggesting. Once you accept your fighting, and stop blaming one another (or yourself) for the outbursts, you may very well find that you do not fight as often or as ferociously. You may find it much easier to recognize the first signs of a fight and to utilize them as signals to back off, cool down, and inquire more calmly into the possibility that there *are* some issues between you, or some sources of stress in your lives, that are calling for recognition and remedial action.

The fact that you can forgive one another after each fight is much more important than the fact of your fighting.

If this doesn't work for you, there are many sources of therapeutic knowledge other than ACA: You could study the self-help literature on couple relations (I would recommend *After the Honeymoon: How Conflict Can Improve Your Relationship,* by Daniel B. Wile). You could take a class on negotiation skills. You could get help from any one of the two hundred or so varieties of professional psychotherapy. You could join a democratic peer-counseling movement like Reevaluation Counseling or Eugene Gendlin's Focusing movement. Of course you could also follow your friends into ACA; I have no doubt that it's helping large numbers of people.

ACA and the broader movement of twelve-step groups represent one of the most significant phenomena of the past decade. Twenty-eight million adult Americans—one in eight—are children of alcoholics. And, as you point out, the potential scope of the movement is even broader. The literature of the movement claims that 70 to 100 percent of North American families are rendered to some degree "dysfunctional" by "addiction"—defined very broadly to include any intense preoccupation with particular forms of escape from emptiness and pain. That pain is understood to be the result of the absence of love, intimacy, compassion, and community in our lives, and it results in toxic shame—a sense of our essential worthlessness and defectiveness as persons.

Many politically progressive psychotherapists are astonished, delighted, and dismayed by the growth of this movement: astonished and delighted that masses of people, for the first time in human history, are under-

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standing how the emotional atmosphere of childhood plays a decisive role in shaping a lifetime of emotional suffering; astonished and delighted also that this movement has shown that millions of "ordinary people" can learn to help themselves and one another by appropriating a set of psychotherapeutic tools—empathic listening, exploration of personal history, problem solving—that have previously been confined to a narrow group of professionals; dismayed, but not at all astonished, at the capture of this movement by a certain kind of conservative, overly "spiritual," totally apolitical religiosity. There is very little appreciation in this movement for the manner in which oppressive economic and political structures—including the structure of the system of gender—require "dysfunctional" family life. There is no recognition of the way in which our society requires domination, submission, and competition—and how these very qualities, useful for the social order, then interfere with our capacities for empathy, friendship, creativity, solidarity, and spiritual experience.

The twelve-step movement *does* condemn American "culture" for its encouragement of workaholism and materialism, for its propagation of the illusion that the pursuit of worldly "success," material objects, and pleasurable sensations is the way to happiness—but it calls for spiritual revival as if this were possible without fundamental social change. We are called simply to surrender to the "Higher Power" of AA, with not even a hint of the necessity to transform the structures of class, race, and gender power which require workaholism and materialism.

Like the vast majority of psychotherapeutic schools, the twelve-step movement is simultaneously liberatory and repressive. It *does* empower us to deal with our problems more effectively as individuals, as members of families, or as participants in large organizations; but it simultaneously disempowers us by reinforcing our assumption that our suffering is caused primarily by a flaw in the "depth" of the psyche. We are taught that if only we could get ourselves and our "family systems" working right, everything would be basically OK.

When we find, as we commonly do, that our lives are still not working, that our lives may feel empty and unfulfilled even after we have resolved or ameliorated the specific problem we sought help for in the twelve-step program or psychotherapy process, we feel confirmed even more powerfully in blaming ourselves ("I'm such a failure even this technique that seems to be working for everyone else couldn't work for me") or blaming others ("People are inherently evil and that's why they are still making my life miserable"). We are thrown back onto the assumptions of the society: that nothing can really be changed, that we should look out for ourselves since that's reality—in short, we are confirmed in our surplus powerlessness.

Many observers of the twelve-step movement have noted that its adherents—like other "patients" and "clients" of psychotherapy—tend to take on a new identity as "sick," "abnormal" people "in recovery." The "adult child" compares herself to an unattainable ideal of the healthy, normal, fully grown-up person, and is ever alert for further evidence of her character flaws and the need to make "amends." Millions label themselves "pathological," supplementing or replacing their addictions with a new addiction to the rituals of the adult child in recovery. So while the twelve-step programs give people some important tools and insights, they may simultaneously reinforce a tragic sense of life which makes us believe that fundamental change is impossible and that, at best, one can try to keep constant guard against one's own tendencies to fall back into the destructive patterns of childhood. And this turns out to involve a new kind of self-blaming that is every bit as damaging to one's ability to engage in social change as are the older forms of toxic shame.

It may be true that human beings can never escape the inevitable pain of existence, and they can never eliminate the dark side, the evil aspect of human nature, but they can bring about fundamental improvements in their lives, in part by making fundamental changes in the larger social and economic order. Hierarchy and competition and the suffering they require are not inescapable features of the human condition. That is the message of *tikkun olam*, a message that is absent from so many of the contemporary therapies and self-help movements that populate the current cultural scene. □

Bible Lesson

Harvey Shapiro

When it's time for the Sacrifice
Abraham pays for his stardom
with terror and sweat.
The risk of talking with God.
At some point He could say to you:
Listen, this is what I want you to do
for me next, take your son, your only
son whom you love ...

Harvey Shapiro is the author of seven books of poetry, most recently National Cold Storage Company: New and Selected Poems *(Wesleyan University Press, 1988).*

APPENDIX D

Year article was published:

Year	Frequency	Percent
1982	0	0.0
1983	3	6.8
1984	1	2.3
1985	1	2.3
1986	1	2.3
1987	2	4.5
1988	3	6.8
1989	5	11.4
1990	14	31.8
1991	8	18.2
1992	6	13.6
	44	100.0%

TABLE 1

Cross-tabulation: Year of Publication by Total Number of Positive, Negative and Neutral Sentences

	1982-87	1988-92	Row Total
Positive	233	1,072	1,305
Negative	69	794	863
Neutral	60	433	493
Column Total	362	2,299	2,661

$x^2 = 43.29$

df = 2

$p < .001$

TABLE 2

Cross-tabulation: Type of Article by Positive or Negative Tone

	Positive	Negative	
Soft News	11	10	21 (articles)
	52.4	47.6	67.7 (percent)
Hard News	9	1	10 (articles)
	90.0	10.0	32.3 (percent)

n = 31
100.0%

Fisher's exact probability = .0416

Abstract

The self-help movement, and the 12-step model of recovery that arose from it, became a booming social trend in the last decade. During that time, millions of Americans flocked to self-help groups to discuss problems ranging from addiction to joblessness. The number of support groups during the 1980s reportedly climbed to 500,000, with some 15 million Americans attending during any given week. As the movement expanded it received extensive media coverage. This content analysis sought to determine whether magazine coverage of the self-help movement was positive from 1982 until the late 1980s and then became more negative through the early 1990s. In a random sampling of 44 magazine articles published between July 1982 and July 1992, each sentence was coded as being favorable, unfavorable or neutral in tone. The content analysis supported the hypothesis; in the early and mid 1980s, 64% of the sentences were favorable, but from 1988 to 1992, only 46% were positive.

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The Women's Movement in the 1920s: American Magazines Document the Health and Progress of Feminism

by Carolyn Ann Bonard

March 15, 1993

The Women's Movement in the 1920s:
American Magazines Document the Health and Progress of Feminism

The women's rights convention held in 1848 at Seneca Falls, New York, commonly dates the beginning of the women's movement in the United States. The convention sparked a 72-year struggle for women's right to vote, which culminated in the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in August 1920. Twenty-seven million women had gained the right to vote.[1]

Thereafter, the women's movement seems to have been cast aside by recorded history. A government textbook states: "Having won its major battle for the right to vote, the women's movement virtually collapsed. Only a few groups continued to work for their cause."[2] A history textbook states that "women's united efforts failed to create an interest group solid enough or powerful enough to dent political, economic, and social systems run by men."[3] Has history been recorded accurately? What happened to the women's movement in the decade following the adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment? Did the movement collapse? Did it fail to dent the systems run by men?

Articles from nine magazines of that decade show that the

women's movement, sometimes under the name of feminism, was a vibrant force having two aspects: the one, political; the other, social and economic.

Achievements of the political aspect of the women's movement can be documented in the passage of laws toward which women had worked and in the placement of women in legislative, executive and judicial positions. More importantly, magazine articles from the decade indicate that the movement allowed women to be assimilated into the political system as they became sufficiently knowledgeable and capable.

The social and economic aspect of the women's movement is not easy to discern because it rests on attitudes. However, magazine articles of the decade indicate that the women's movement was shaping the beginning of a new social order, not in a determined, organized manner, but as a natural result of women's collective individuality--the individuality of each woman who expressed her uniqueness, her independence and her equality with man.

Thus, magazine articles indicate that the women's movement did affect the political, social and economic systems during the decade following the gain of women's right to vote. The articles indicate that the movement did not collapse; rather, it worked as an undercurrent within the systems.

This study, then, began with these questions: What happened to the women's movement between August 1920 and August 1930? Did it collapse? Did it fail to dent the systems run by men?

Method

The method of research for this study was intended to be comprehensive and thorough enough to be conclusive. Three steps were taken to locate the most widely circulated and influential articles that might provide answers to the research questions. The first step used Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature[4] to locate articles that collectively represented a broad and diversified base both in content and audience. The second step was a complete search through The Readers' Digest for condensed articles from other magazines. The third step was a complete search through four magazines for any relevant articles, thereby determining the effectiveness of using Readers' Guide and The Readers' Digest to locate appropriate articles.

Step one had two parts. In the first part, 13 varied headings were chosen in the search through Readers' Guide. Some headings reflected the issues of the decade: "Education of Women," "Feminism," "Married Women--Employment," "Woman--Employment," "Woman--Equal Rights," "Woman Suffrage--United States," "Women and Politics" and "Working Girls and Women." Other headings were more general: "Married Women," "Wives," "Woman," "Woman--Social and Moral Questions" and "Woman--United States."

In the search through Readers' Guide, as the second part of step one, nine magazines were chosen that collectively represented a broad and diversified base. Two women's magazines were selected: The Ladies' Home Journal and Good Housekeeping.

Also selected were three general interest magazines: The Saturday Evening Post, Collier's, The National Weekly and The American Magazine. These magazines had a similar format and content to the selected women's magazines, for example, fiction with illustrations, and advertisements dispersed throughout the magazines. Four magazines were selected that could be classified as intellectual: Harper's Monthly Magazine, The Nation, The Atlantic Monthly and The American Mercury. These magazines, in general, could be described as collections of essays. The first step, then, involved locating articles published between August 1920 and August 1930 in the nine selected magazines listed under the 13 specified headings in Readers' Guide.

For the second step, all issues of The Readers' Digest were searched from the first issue in February 1922 to August 1930. Five condensed articles were found that had a bearing on this study and were located in original form.[5]

In the third step, all issues of Harper's Monthly Magazine, and two other monthly magazines, The Ladies' Home Journal and The American Magazine, were searched from August 1920 to August 1930 to find articles that might indicate what happened to the women's movement during this period. In addition, all issues of The American Mercury, also a monthly magazine, were searched from the first issue in January 1924 to August 1930. In The Ladies' Home Journal, eight articles were found through Readers' Guide, and no articles were found through The Readers' Digest. A complete search of the 120 issues of the decade found two additional

articles, which might have been listed in Readers' Guide under a heading other than the 13 headings selected for this study. In The American Magazine and The American Mercury, only two articles, one article in each magazine, were found through The Readers' Digest, no articles were found through Readers' Guide, and a complete search of all the issues of the decade yielded no additional articles. In Harper's Monthly Magazine, eight articles were found through Readers' Guide and two of these were also found in The Readers' Digest. A complete search of the 120 issues of the decade found four additional articles.

The complete searches through these four magazines confirmed that using Readers' Guide and The Readers' Digest to locate appropriate articles had been a sufficiently thorough method of research, which adequately reflected the availability of articles relating to the women's movement during the selected era.

The number of articles found that pertained to this study was a small percentage of articles listed under the 13 headings in Readers' Guide. For example, of the 37 articles listed for Collier's, The National Weekly, one article had a bearing on this study; of the 24 articles listed for The Atlantic Monthly, two pertained to this study; and of the 64 articles listed for The Nation, three were relevant. All the articles found in the remaining magazines were listed in Readers' Guide: one in The Saturday Evening Post and six in Good Housekeeping. One article in Good Housekeeping was also found in The Readers' Digest. All together, 37 articles were found that pertained to the subject of

this study.

These three steps, then, located articles that might provide answers to these questions: What happened to the women's movement in the decade following the adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment? Did the movement collapse? Did it fail to dent the systems run by men? These steps also assured the research was comprehensive and thorough enough to be conclusive.

Results

Two articles connected the women's movement, or feminism, with two aspects of a woman's life: her career or job and her marriage or love life. Elizabeth Breuer made these connections and defined feminism as well in the April 1925 issue of Harper's Monthly Magazine when she stated:

> In this country feminism, as an organized movement of women in great active groups, is over. But in its place is rising a feminism which is a point of view. This point of view expresses itself not so much in sex-consciousness as in the personal self-consciousness of women who are trying to straddle two horses and ride them both to a victorious finish. One of these is the Job--through which woman can express herself as an individual in a world of masculine standards; the other is her love life, which she cannot leave behind if she is to be happy as a woman.[6]

Breuer wrapped up her definition of feminism by stating: "The woman who attempts complete fulfillment in both aspects of her life is a feminist."[7] Several points in these quotes are worth particular notice. According to Breuer, feminism was attitude rather than action, this attitude emphasized the individual rather than the female, and the job was not subservient to the

love life.

In the April 1922 issue of The Atlantic Monthly, Ethel Puffer Howes also connected the women's movement with the career-marriage aspiration. The attitude that emphasized the importance of the career was not easily formed. Howes asked why the "question of the full professional career for women in its relation to marriage; the principle of the independence of work from [marital] status" was ignored?[8] She answered: "I am inclined to think that the question was, at first, not even formulated; it was tacitly assumed that marriage barred or terminated a career."[9]

Why couldn't a married woman have a career? Why did a woman have to choose between marriage and career? This was an issue that Nancy Barr Mavity addressed in the July 1926 issue of Harper's Monthly Magazine. She stated: "The choice has no meaning unless marriage implies of necessity the bargain of financial support on the part of the husband for domestic services on the part of the wife."[10] Mavity suggested the ultimate conclusion to the marriage-career issue in this question: "Is the chance to choose one's work as a person instead of a sex-being worth the long and complex struggle to amend our entire social and economic constitution?"[11]

The tradition that dictated that woman should serve man in return for financial support elevated man above woman. In the April 1921 issue of The Ladies' Home Journal, Mary Roberts Rinehart stated:

> It is odd now to remember the attitude of society up to a short time ago as to the earning woman. And the attitude of society, after all, was merely the collective view of the families themselves. The family pride suffered. It reflected on the pride of the masculine portion of it, as indicating their failure to support their womankind.[12]

Tradition, then, tended to keep woman in either her father's home or her husband's home, as Rinehart stated: "A woman, then, had four actual choices at the best: To marry for love; to marry without love; to stay at home and exhaust herself in family service...; or valiantly to defy public opinion and the family pride, and to go out and earn."[13]

But woman's desire for freedom overwhelmed the power of tradition. In the October 1927 issue of Harper's Monthly Magazine, Dorothy Dunbar Bromley recognized the importance of the economic independence that woman obtained through a career or job. She stated that woman's economic independence "spells her freedom as an individual, enabling her to marry or not to marry, as she chooses--to terminate a marriage that has become unbearable, and to support and educate her children if necessary."[14]

This principle was echoed by Harry Emerson Fosdick in the October 1928 issue of The American Magazine when he stated: "Freedom is a matter of economics; there is little use in claiming to be free if one is economically dependent."[15]

Again, the relationship between economics and freedom was recognized by Ruth Scott Miller in the January 1925 issue of The Ladies' Home Journal. She stated that the woman "is a wage

earner and a voter. She is out of the slave class."[16] In other words, Miller stated that women had gained economic independence and "elevation to a position of equal power with men."[17]

In the February 1921 issue of The Atlantic Monthly, Mary Van Kleeck connected feminism with four aspects of women's lives, including the two aspects that have been considered so far in this study. She stated that feminism's "essence is voluntary choice--in marriage, in motherhood, in politics, and in a career."[18]

Feminism allowed women freedom to seek fulfillment in both the home--marriage and motherhood comprehensively considered--and career or to freely choose either home or career. In the August 1921 issue of Good Housekeeping, Anne Shannon Monroe stated: "Men have cried out in alarm, 'With all this suffrage, with all this entering of professions, with all this throwing wide of the world's doors, women will rush out of the homes!' And I want to answer, 'Perhaps that is the best thing about it.'"[19] Monroe added that women "who don't belong will rush out and find their rightful places, and the home-job will eventually fall to those who should hold it."[20]

Because the opportunity to be economically independent was open to women, they could freely choose marriage and motherhood as a career. In the June 2, 1926, issue of The Nation, Eunice Fuller Barnard presented this option along with two others when she stated:

> The party of the left suggests that women make parenthood and profession coordinate but independent,

> as men have done; the party of the right that they develop parenthood itself to a professional status. The compromise party believes that along with their major profession of parenthood women may as a minor interest still cherish and develop their individual talents.[21]

Women were free to make intelligent choices because they were no longer bound to tradition for tradition's sake. In the August 1920 issue of The Ladies' Home Journal, Harriet Abbot stated: "Now, our conduct shall be the result of intelligent choice, and when we elect to live according to the older doctrines it shall be because we recognize truth even when it comes to us in some of the shackles of platitudes."[22]

The conflict that naturally arose between career and marriage was addressed in two articles. The new relationship between a woman's career and her marriage upset the social order based on woman as dependent housewife and man as bread winner and protector. In the November 1921 issue of Harper's Monthly Magazine, Alexander Black stated the man's point of view concerning this upheaval:

> The whole theory of taking care of woman involved her occupying a 'place,' so that one who played the part of a showman exhibiting the world might be free to say that over there, in a cage, were the women. But the women broke out of the cage. They roved over the whole picture. This made it exceedingly difficult to go on thinking about taking care of them.[23]

Black added that women have "smashed the tradition of 'place.' They have overrun the forbidden industries and professions."[24]

In the December 1925 issue of Harper's Monthly Magazine, Beatrice M. Hinkle also addressed the issue of conflict between career and marriage. She stated that a "change in the status of

women" was "brought about through working outside the home and the winning of economic independence."[25] The career was no longer subservient to marriage; thus, it opposed the traditional marriage. Attitudes toward both aspects of a woman's life were being altered. Hinkle stated that "it is not possible to separate the changed attitude towards marriage from the changed status of women. One is dependent upon the other. It is women who have revolted and for whom the conflict over marriage has arisen."[26]

Three articles expressed concern about the uncertain future of the social order as a result of the conflict between career and marriage. Fosdick stated: "The real danger in our situation lies in the fact that so many people see clearly what they are revolting from and so few see at all what they are revolting to."[27]

In the May 1929 issue of Harper's Monthly Magazine, Lillian Symes echoed concern about the future of the social order. She stated that feminists' "attempts at economic and social emancipation" have put them in the position of "playing both a man's and a woman's part. Instead of achieving freedom, they have achieved the right to carry two burdens, to embrace a new form of servitude."[28] Woman had become full-time housewife and also full-time breadwinner, but she could not return to the former order. Symes stated: "Already the economic foundations of the older order are shifting and one does not return for shelter to a home which already shows signs of decay."[29]

Similarly, in the June 1930 issue of Harper's Monthly Magazine, Symes stated: "Old values are giving way to what seems a loss of all values. Intellectually and socially we are in a chaos of conflict."[30]

Two articles were somewhat optimistic about the imminent collapse of the traditional social order. Hinkle stated: "The great movement which is now sweeping over the land, affecting the women of all classes, carries with it something immeasurable, for it is the destroyer of the old mold which for ages has held women bound to instinct."[31] The emphasis of the traditional order, the "old mold," was on the woman as wife and mother; the emphasis of the women's movement was on the individual. Hinkle stated that women have "cast aside the maternal ideal as their goal and are demanding recognition as individuals first, and as wives and mothers second."[32]

In the March 1929 issue of Harper's Monthly Magazine, Floyd H. Allport recognized that, following the collapse of the traditional social order, a more wholesome order would arise. He stated: "For while the sophistries underlying our present sex-stereotypes are being exposed, there must arise the question of what is to take their place."[33] Allport foretold that "in the end women will gain a vision of their true destiny, and will go forward to meet it, the partners, rather than the moral bond-servants, of men."[34]

The idea of a new social order that recognized man's as well as woman's individuality--uniqueness, independence, equality--was

expressed in other articles as well. Hinkle stated:

> Women have escaped from the authority and restrictions imposed upon them as the result of the unalterable convictions of man that his wife was his property, and that she must live her life as he wished it. The twain are no longer one flesh--the man being 'the one'--but instead they are two distinct personalities, forced to find a new basis of adaptation to each other and a new form of relationship.[35]

Woman's striving for her own individuality led her to recognize man's individuality as well. The new marriage order was to be based on each partner recognizing the other one's individuality and relating accordingly. Hinkle stated:

> The importance of an inward harmony of personalities in marriage is recognized as never before, and this vision and ideal toward which both men and women equally shall strive is the new demand of women in the marriage relation. This is the first fruits of woman's new-found individualism.[36]

In the February 1930 issue of The American Mercury, Edward Sapir also expressed anticipation of a wholesome social order that would emphasize the individual. He expected a new form of marriage to emerge from the traditional marriage institution, a marriage between "a man and a woman who, loving each other, do not wish to live apart. Whether such a union is blessed by offspring or not is immaterial. Whether or not it has been sanctified by civil or ecclesiastical authority is immaterial."[37] Sapir added:

> All this does not mean chaos, but rather the emergence of cleanly defined psychological patterns which have intimate relevance for the life of the individual at the expense of superimposed institutional patterns which take little or no account of individual psychology.[38]

The new social order was also recognized by Miller in her

article. Concerning the opinion of Judge Joseph Sabath of the Superior Court of Cook County, Illinois, "who holds the world's judicial divorce record with over twelve thousand decisions," Miller stated:

> Judge Sabath insists, perhaps more vehemently than most, that the world must recognize the new social order of things; must realize that when a marriage occurs today new relationships are set up that are entirely opposed to those which obtained fifty years ago.[39]

That a new social order was initiated by the women's movement, or feminism, was recognized by Mary Austin in the July 20, 1927, issue of The Nation. She referred to the "forward turn of twentieth-century feminism" and defined this phrase when she stated: "All that votes for women seems to mean at the moment is a marker for the turn at which the redistribution of sex emphasis begins."[40] Both man and woman had been bound to the traditional social order that was based on their sex rather than on their individuality. Austin stated:

> Now that the turn is accomplished, and nothing startlingly political or professional seems to be determined by it, what does stand out in the nature of an achievement is the escape not of one sex from the other but of both from a social complex unwholesomely driven and informed by sex distinctions.[41]

The significance of women's right to vote was recognized also by Elizabeth Frazer. In the September 11, 1920, issue of The Saturday Evening Post, she put the acquisition of women's right to vote into perspective with women's struggle to be recognized as individuals. She stated that

> the woman-suffrage movement...was perhaps the greatest single influence in sharpening and bringing to a point

> those other more subterranean and unconscious forces that were advancing woman's cause. The whole tide was setting in the direction of the freedom of women; and the suffrage movement called attention to but did not produce that tide.[42]

Collectively, these magazine articles overwhelmingly indicate that the women's movement in the decade following the adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment was shaping the beginning of a new social order. Why this turn, which had both economic as well as social aspects, was not recorded in history can be explained in two ways. First, feminism was attitude rather than action, and attitude is not easily transferred to recorded history. Secondly, the issue of women's rights as individuals was the undercurrent rather than the vanguard of the women's movement. In the October 1926 issue of Harper's Monthly Magazine, R. Le Clerc Phillips stated that women "who were the voices of the feminist movement" concentrated "on rights of citizenship, rights of economic independence, and, above all, on the right to give practical expression to their political opinions," rather than speaking out about their "rights as women."[43] Phillips defined "rights as women" as "their rights to the open expression of their individuality as women absolutely untrammelled by all male preconceptions--and misconceptions--of what that individuality really is."[44]

Van Kleeck stated that feminism's essence was choice, by exercise of the will, in marriage, motherhood, career and politics. The first three aspects have already been considered in this study in relation to the shaping of a new social order.

The political aspect of the women's movement during the first decade of the Nineteenth Amendment was documented in magazine articles on the passage of laws toward which women had worked and the placement of women in legislative, executive and judicial positions. A greater significance of the political aspect of the women's movement, though, was found in three points that were emphasized in several articles. First, women's right to vote was their right as U.S. citizens, and whether they exercised that right was not, in itself, a measure of their achievement or failure in politics. Secondly, women were generally indifferent to politics, but this indifference was gradually being overcome through political education and involvement in politics at a primary level. Thirdly, women did not organize as a faction, bloc or party.

Concerning the vote as a right of citizens, Charles A. Selden, in the June 1924 issue of The Ladies' Home Journal, quoted Alice Paul, leader of the National Woman's Party: "Suffrage was always demanded and finally gained as a matter of abstract justice. It was a right long denied and then won, not by promises as to how it would be used, nor by predictions of a millennium, but simply because it was a right."[45]

Two editorials analyzed the nation's political situation following the first 10 years of woman suffrage. An editorial in the May 17, 1930, issue of Collier's, The National Weekly, stated: "Suffrage for women or men was an act of justice which can neither succeed nor fail. Whether men or women vote stupidly

or wisely, for good measures or bad, is beside the point. The right to vote is inherent in our kind of government."[46] The editorial also stated: "If ten years of voting have shown anything at all, it has been proved that women and men in politics behave much alike."[47] This statement implied that women acted individually as citizens rather than as a female bloc.

An editorial in the August 1930 issue of The Ladies' Home Journal reiterated the point concerning the vote as a right. It stated that leaders of the woman suffrage movement "asked for justice; for the granting of a withheld right."[48] Another point of this editorial was found in this statement: "It seems to a great many unprejudiced people that these ten years, for all their voting, have hardly scratched the surface of the general indifference of women to politics."[49] Why weren't women more interested in politics? The editorial stated that the "women who were to be given suffrage had not been brought up to use it."[50]

In the October 1924 issue of Good Housekeeping, Ida M. Tarbell also recognized women's indifference to politics when she stated: "The only real failure at present in woman's suffrage is the failure to exercise it."[51] She also recognized the cause of this indifference when she stated: "One handles a new subject shyly and awkwardly. One does not know the vocabulary, etiquette, principles."[52]

Women's indifference to their right to vote and their need of political education were subjects covered in Elizabeth Jordan's article in the February 1921 issue of The Ladies' Home

Journal. She stated: "It had not yet occurred to them that they could affect the politics in their local environments. Least of all did it strike them that they needed training as a preparation for their new responsibility."[53]

The significance of political education for women was pointed out by Elizabeth Breuer in the December 1923 issue of Harper's Monthly Magazine. She stated that suffragist leader Carrie Chapman Catt "first saw that, if the vote was only a political tool, it was one which women must be educated to use intelligently. Here was a task leading to the more subtle emancipation of women."[54]

In the April 1922 issue of Good Housekeeping, Frazer, a prolific writer during this era, stated: "In this task of educating the women in the abc of practical, every-day local politics, two agencies, the National Federation of Women's Clubs and the National League of Women Voters, have done yeoman service."[55]

In fact, according to an editorial in the January 1921 issue of The Ladies' Home Journal, the top priority in 1921 for the National League of Women Voters, the "great conservative body of the new women citizens," was "education in citizenship."[56]

Frazer noted this priority in the August 1924 issue of The Ladies' Home Journal. She quoted Maud Wood Park, president of the National League of Women Voters: "The actual work of the League, the end, for which all the other things are the means, is first of all training in citizenship."[57]

In addition to its work in political education, the League was involved in effecting legislation. Selden, in his 1924 article, stated:

> From the adoption of suffrage and up to the time of the recent Ninth Congress of the International Woman Suffrage Alliance in Rome, the League of Women Voters in America had secured the enactment of 287 laws in the various states and in Congress, for the benefit of women and children. It had brought about the defeat of thirty measures concerning women which it did not approve.[58]

In the April 1922 issue of The Ladies' Home Journal, Selden listed the National League of Women Voters and the General Federation of Women's Clubs as the national women's organizations with the largest number of members among the 14 organizations of the Women's Joint Congressional Committee.[59] Concerning the purpose of this greater organization, Selden stated: "When, on occasion, the women organizations see that it is necessary to act unanimously on any measure, as was the case in the [Sheppard-Towner] Maternity Bill fight, they put into action the most powerful lobby that has ever operated on the American Congress."[60]

Emily Newell Blair, vice-chairman of the Democratic National Committee, did not view these organizations as being political. In the October 1925 issue of Harper's Monthly Magazine, she stated: "To me the political method is the using of votes to get results. What you give is a vote and what you get is victory or defeat for your candidate or your measure. In this sense none of the women's organizations is 'political.'"[61]

In the September 1922 issue of Good Housekeeping, Frazer

recognized early in the era that "there will be no 'woman's bloc,' and any Woman's Party which divides along purely sex lines will not have a political success."[62] But Frazer stated that women did have particular interests, specifically "in the home, in the young, in the mothers--in short, in the race."[63] Frazer stated that initially women's political influence would be in local and municipal affairs more than in higher political divisions. She gave two reasons, the first being that "such affairs touch most closely the home."[64] Secondly, she stated that this primary area is the "beginning, the amoeba of political life. That is where women will receive their schooling, their discipline, learn the abc's of practical politics, and become realists instead of nonsensical and far-fetched theorists."[65]

Blair, in her article, looked at women's political progress after five years of having the vote. She, too, recognized that women acted individually as citizens, rather than as a faction. She stated: "Woman suffrage did not mobilize a woman block."[66] Blair noted that the election of two women as state governors indicated a "change in the whole attitude of society" because the women were elected for political reasons.[67] Blair stated:

> It shows the way by which a woman can move into office, namely by becoming identified in the public mind with issues of which it approves and by winning that public's confidence as to performance--which is exactly the way by which a man comes into office. It is equality.[68]

The Nineteenth Amendment had made women equal to men in reference to the right to vote. The gaining of this right opened the door to equality in other political areas as women became more and

more politically minded. Blair stated:

> The battle of woman suffrage was a fight to win opportunity for women. Already it has won for some women an opportunity to become governors, a few to become congressmen, one to become a judge of a State Supreme Court, many to reach appointive offices, more to be elected to state legislatures and county offices. It has opened the door of party organizations. It has placed women in state and national conventions. It has won for all women a right to political opinions.[69]

Thus, to say that the women's movement failed to dent the political system run by men is to be looking for a woman's bloc and not see that, rather than denting the system, women were being assimilated into it as they became sufficiently knowledgeable and capable.

The vibrancy and general health of the women's movement in the 1920s is indicated, also, in discussions about issues. Van Kleeck, in defining feminism in her article, explained how feminism related to issues of the decade. She stated:

> Feminism is not, and has not, a definite programme. Like democracy, it is a spirit and not an invention--not an institution, but a changing life within the changing forms of institutions. And feminism, like democracy, busies itself with the issues that the times create.[70]

The main issues for women during the first decade of the Nineteenth Amendment were related to equal rights for women, primarily economic and legal equality. The editorial in Collier's, The National Weekly stated: "The chief obstacles to equality are economic, not political. Women generally are paid less than men employed in similar jobs."[71]

Selden, in his 1924 article, stated that Ethel M. Smith, the national legislative representative of the women's trade unions,

noted that employers resisted women's attempts to secure legislation for minimum wages and eight-hour work days. Selden quoted Smith: "It is the economic fight that is the bitterest of all. Men may be quite willing to let women vote, but it is quite another thing to pay them the same wages as men, or allow them to secure a shorter workday."[72]

Women's legal inequality was summed up by Rheta Childe Dorr in the July 1928 issue of Good Housekeeping. She stated that

> all or most of the disabilities of married women are due to old laws which never have been altered by statute. The laws of this country are based on the ancient English Common Law--except in Louisiana, where the basis is the French Code Napoleon. Under both these codes husband and wife are held to be one--the man being the one. When they were framed, a married woman had no separate existence from her husband. She could own no property, real or personal; her wages, if any, belonged to her husband; he was the sole guardian of her children and could give them away if he chose, could apprentice them to trades, forbid their marriages, or force them to marry without the mother's consent. In fact, as the legal phrase had it, a married woman was civilly dead.[73]

In the March 1924 issue of Good Housekeeping, Inez Haynes Irwin stated: "In 1848 there was held at Seneca Falls, New York, the first woman's rights convention in the world."[74] She added that, of all the demands drawn up at the convention so women could obtain equal rights with men, the "only right we have gained for all the women of the United States is the right to vote."[75]

Likewise, in the February 1926 issue of Harper's Monthly Magazine, Edna Kenton stated:

> The Nineteenth Amendment gave women as a matter of legal fact, just one thing--the power to vote. It

> relieved them of not one of the other disabilities whose removal they have been more or less feebly requesting since 1848, when the whole matter of "equal rights" was first clearly formulated in a series of direct demands.[76]

Kenton added that these demands "started the whole organized woman movement."[77]

Women's struggle for complete equality since they acquired the right to vote was carried on to a great extent by two organizations. In the August 16, 1922, issue of The Nation, Anne Martin stated that the National League of Women Voters and the National Woman's Party, the "successors of the two great suffrage organizations which won the vote," were "still doggedly pegging along after 'equality,' which the vote was supposed to confer."[78]

The January 1921 editorial in The Ladies' Home Journal noted that the "minority section of the women's movement, the National Woman's Party,...conducted the militant campaign for the vote."[79]

Breuer, in her 1923 article, pointed out that "the National Suffrage Association virtually went en masse into the League of Women Voters."[80]

Concerning the strategies of the National Woman's Party and the National League of Women Voters, Selden, in his 1924 article, stated that

> the Woman's Party wants complete equality at once regardless of the consequences to women themselves. The League strives to remedy defects, one at a time, without risking the repeal or nullification of laws already won for the special protection of women in industry and elsewhere where the fact of sex itself demands special protection.[81]

Breuer, in her 1923 article, summarized the basis of the

animosity between the two camps of the women's movement on the issue of how to obtain equal rights. She stated:

> The Woman's Party is regarded by many women's organizations as their common enemy, being as it is the radical wing of the woman's movement in the United States. This attitude proceeds from the intention of the Woman's Party to remove from the statute books all laws which discriminate for or against women on sex lines, and that destruction accomplished, to create other laws which shall give necessary protection in industry, marriage, and other legal and social relationships, to men and women alike as human beings, regardless of sex, but regardful of the minimum of physical endurance for both. To accomplish this it seeks to tear down the whole body of protective legislation which has been built up through years of painful struggle by the majority of women's organizations, and the women's organizations are therefore fighting its program tooth and nail.[82]

Thus, these articles indicate that the women's movement, or feminism, was divided over the issue of how to obtain equal rights and that there was so much controversy over this issue that the movement must have been very much alive.

Conclusion

Magazine articles published during the first decade of the Nineteenth Amendment indicate that history has not been recorded accurately. The women's movement, sometimes under the name of feminism, was a vibrant force, a new attitude, that was shaping the beginning of a new social order and allowing women to be assimilated into the political system. Thus, to say that the women's movement failed to dent the political, economic and social systems run by men is to indicate a misunderstanding of the movement's significance. And to say that the movement

collapsed is to overlook the ongoing controversy and activity concerning equal rights. These errors in recording history can be attributed to the fact that abstractions such as attitude, assimilation and controversy are not easily written into history, which emphasizes action, structure and events. Another factor contributing to these errors is the indication that the women's movement was an undercurrent, which historians, simply, might have overlooked.

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Pitiful perverts, neurotic victims: magazine coverage of sex crimes, 1940-1970

by

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Paper presented at the annual convention of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication, Kansas City, Mo., August 1993. Magazine Division.

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Reports of sex crimes in the United States -- including rape -- tripled during the years from 1940 to 1970. Because magazines were the predominate source of information about sex crimes, 48 articles (of a possible 59) about sex crimes were analyzed to determine how sex offenders and victims were portrayed. Women's and general-interest magazine coverage was compared. The focus of many articles was the sex offender. Most articles described sex offenders as pitiable and not responsible for their crimes; the articles attempted to differentiate sex offenders from "normal" men. Coverage of victims tended to reinforce traditional rape myths -- either they were attractive or did something to deserve their victimization. Women's magazines reflected the rise in sex crimes, but general-interest magazines did not. General-interest magazines sensationalized sex crimes and interracial rapes. Until 1960, women's magazines did not mention that women could be raped.

The American media are filled with sexual information. Television and radio talk shows tease viewers with tidbits about nymphomaniacs, transvestites, extramarital affairs and strippers. Network television entertainment is laced with double entendres and suggestions of sex. Women's magazines offer advice on everything from playing the "game" between men and women to pleasing men sexually.[1] Even general interest news magazines occasionally use sex to boost their sales, as *Newsweek* did in February 1992 with its "Is this child gay?" cover story.[2]

Along with this quasi-celebration of sexuality, some sobering facts have finally been brought into the light. Child pornography, molestation, incest and abuse have reared their ugly heads to become a national concern; child abuse reports have tripled since 1960.[3] Rape, another formerly unmentionable topic, has quadrupled since 1960.[4] (Rape is a crime of violence, but is still frequently purported by myth to be a sex-driven crime.) These sex crimes have become a form of entertainment as well. One of every eight movies produced in the United States contains a scene depicting violence against women.[5]

It was not that long ago, however -- a little more than a quarter of a century -- that sex crimes were practically a taboo topic in the media. In the 1940s, six articles on sex crimes were published in general-interest magazines in the United States, and none appeared in women's magazines, according to the *Reader's Guide to Periodicals*.[6] (See Table 1.) During the 1950s, relatively few articles (26) on sex crimes, including rape, were published in U.S. women's and general-interest magazines. Twenty-nine articles appeared between 1960 and 1970. From the 1950s to the 1960s, however, articles on sex crimes increased 267 percent in women's magazines; in general interest magazines, they decreased 18 percent. Arguably, this divergence may be attributed in part to the consciousness-raising promoted by the

women's movement in the late 1960s.

The scarcity of information in popular magazines might suggest that sex crimes were not a problem during this 30-year period. A check of crime statistics, however, indicates otherwise. From 1957 to 1970, the number of forcible rapes reported to police increased steadily, from 13,000 to 38,000, and reports of aggravated assaults (although these include more than sexual assaults) tripled to 331,000.[7] More tellingly, the FBI estimated in 1950 that a rape occurred every 43 minutes;[8] 15 years later, a rape was estimated to occur every 26 minutes.[9] While the general-interest magazine coverage of sex crime was decreasing, then, the rape rate was actually rising.

Because rape and other sex crimes were basically forbidden subjects on television and in most motion pictures, the public's knowledge of the nature of the crimes, the offenders and the victims was limited. Then, as now, television news and newspapers reported specific crimes, but research suggests that newspapers usually give details only on the more sensational rapes, such as those that end in murder.[10] Furthermore, most specific crimes would be reported only locally, giving the public a piecemeal picture of sex crimes without a broader context with which to form reasoned attitudes. Popular magazines were left as a major source of general crime information for the public.

Women's magazines, however, have frequently come under fire for their vacuous content, particularly during the late 1940s, the 1950s and 1960s. Friedan charged that the magazines did not provide an adequate picture of the world, omitting information about women's health and discouraging women from entering the workplace.[11] If an accurate portrayal of the world includes the ugly details of sex crimes and rapes, it is not an unreasonable extrapolation to question the way in which these crimes were described in women's magazines.

Media coverage of crime, especially in television and newspapers, in part shapes the public's perception of the danger inherent in a society.[12] Feminist scholar Jane Caputi posits that the popular press's portrayal of sex crimes -- in particular, sex offenders who commit murder -- is "deeply intertwined and mutually reinforcing" with the increase in sex crimes (especially sex murders) in the last century.[13] Indeed, communications theorists have found that over time, the continued treatment of social issues in certain ways can create a social reality that becomes more real for the public than reality itself.[14] If popular magazines were a primary source of information about sex crimes from the 1940s to the 1970s, then they may have played a fairly large role in shaping the attitudes of an entire generation about sex crime. These notions suggest the following research questions: What language was used to describe the sex offender? How were victims described? Were there differences in sex crime coverage between women's magazines and general interest magazines?

To answer these questions, an analysis was conducted of 48 articles about sex crimes that appeared in popular magazines between 1940 and 1970. During this period, 11 articles were published in women's magazines, mostly in *Ladies' Home Journal*; Ten of these articles were read for this study. Of the 48 general-interest magazine articles on sex crimes, 38 available articles were read. Book reviews were not included in the analysis. The articles were read in a random order to reduce ordering effects.

A wide range of behavior was included in the term "sex crimes." Obviously, rape, attempted rape and gang-rape comprised a large portion of the crimes. Rape victims discussed in the articles ranged from ages 3 to 75. Child molesting, statuatory rape and fondling were mentioned frequently; sexual assaults (other than rape) of women were seldom mentioned. It should be noted, though, that the fact

women could be raped was not discussed in women's magazines until 1960.[15] "Minor" offenses included were exhibitionism, voyeurism, obscene phone calls and homosexuality, although the latter was not discussed. Incest was not mentioned specifically until 1966.[16]

One-fourth of all articles focused on protecting children from sex offenders. Another 25 percent was based on a specific case, and the remaining half dealt with information about sex offenders, sex crime laws, statistics, treatment of offenders and the prevention of sex crimes. The sex offenders were invariably male. Only three of the 48 articles noted that women could commit sex crimes, and these merely described female offenders as extremely rare. Research on the history of sex offenders suggests that this portrayal is accurate, as known sex criminals are nearly always male.[17]

Over the 30-year period, little detectable change occurred in the content of the articles. It is clear by their scarcity, though, that sex crimes were an extremely sensitive topic, even into the more liberated 1960s. One of two articles appearing in *Parents* magazine during the three decades was prefaced with an apologetic hand-written editor's note, stating in part: "We hesitated to discuss so painful a subject as this, but there is no safety in ignorance .... We believe you will be grateful to us for publishing this article."[18] This article was published in 1953, and the fact that it was the last one in this magazine suggests that perhaps *Parents* readers may have protested the content.

The shocking nature of sex crimes was somewhat veiled by emphasizing information about the sex offenders themselves and, in many cases, by alluding to the myth that the victim did something to cause the crime. These themes are discussed in more detail below.

Descriptions of sex offenders

Sex offenders received the most attention in the articles studied, often as the subjects of research. Although the magazines described the offenders in frightening terms such as "sex psychopaths,"[19] "sex maniacs,"[20] "insane rapists,"[21] "sex fiends,"[22] "perverts"[23] and "corrupters of children,"[24] the text of the articles tended to portray the offenders as "sexually abnormal"[25] men who were unfortunate victims of various circumstances. Occasionally this less-than-unfavorable portrayal was ostensibly to calm the worries of parents.[26] More frequently, though, sympathetic descriptions of sex offenders came out of actual interviews conducted by scholars with convicted criminals: The 1965 Kinsey Report emphasized the harmlessness of most sex offenders in several magazines.[27] This apparent contradiction between the sensational terms used to generalize about offenders and the implication that the offenders were societal victims helped to shift the focus away from the increasing problem of sex crimes and the effects such crimes had on victims. Cameron and Frazer, however, suggest that these kinds of labels serve the subtler purpose of distancing the sex offender "from the mass of 'normal' men."[28]

Although the crimes they committed were often atrocious, according to the magazines, sex offenders were at the mercy of extenuating factors. A man's own mental capabilities could cause him to be a "sex-warped criminal."[29] Most of the articles agreed that sex offenders were not like normal men, but the difference varied widely. Psychological diagnoses ranged from the borderline psychotic[30] to the severe schizophrenic of the paranoid type.[31] Some scientists went a step further, theorizing that "sex variants are biochemically different from normal people."[32] The man thought to be the Boston Strangler, in trial for the "lesser" crimes of sexually assaulting four women, had "one of the most crushing sexual

drives that psychiatric science has ever encountered."[33] Undoubtedly, these clinical terms suggested to readers that psychologists were in control of the sex-crime situation and comforted them with the idea that sex offenders could be differentiated from the general public. Perhaps psychology would eventually remove these menaces from society through tests. Intelligence was also mentioned occasionally to illustrate the abnormality of sex offenders. One rapist suffered from a genius IQ,[34] while another's intelligence was slightly below normal.[35]

If the discussion of sex offenders as puppets of uncontrollable urges did not sooth worried parents and frightened women, another theme may have alleviated their fears. Even more common than the mention of psychological problems was the portrayal of the offender as a "pitiable creature."[36] In these cases, sex offenders -- especially exhibitionists and child molesters -- were described as timid, weak and unaggressive. Nervous parents were supposed to find comfort in the words of Dr. Spock, the renowned child expert, who wrote that child molesters "are, admittedly, disturbed people, but of an unassertive, ineffectual, lonely type, who often do not go beyond fondling a child's genitals."[37] (Spock assured *Ladies' Home Journal* readers that the little girls who experience this kind of assault were too young to realize what had happened to them.)

The theme of harmlessness further extended rapists' psychological problems to a more universal explanation, that of a lack of normal sex relations. Their fear of women, it seemed, caused these men to rape. Experts reinforced this notion by expressing their own surprise at the pathos of convicted rapists:

> "We [the Kinsey researchers] were struck by the fact that very few of the prisoners resembled the boogeyman of popular imagination -- the "sex fiend," hopped up by dope, his imagination fired by pornography. Some, indeed, were the most pathetic and harmless of bumblers. And virtually all were what modern slang calls losers."[38]

Again, whether the point of such sympathetic discussion was to reduce worries and fear is moot; these themes tended to shift the responsibility for the commission of sex crimes to the sex offender's family (particularly the mother) or to uncontrollable psychological causes. Indeed, one article went so far as to suggest that to send the "sorriest of the sexual offenders" -- Peeping Toms and exhibitionists -- to prison as criminals was foolish.[39] This kind of language virtually exonerated sex offenders from responsibility for their crimes. When the criminal is not to blame, society needs to find a different scapegoat; indeed, as discussed below, the magazines provided an alternative.

Whatever the mental problems of the "sexually aberrant"[40] were, the articles usually concluded that they could not help themselves. Although the root of the deviance has never been definitely identified, all of the articles agreed on the fact that sex criminals were faced with an irresistible urge. A 1966 article concluded that the child molester "did not inherit his bias in that direction, nor did he choose his form of sex expression any more than he would elect to contract hepatitis."[41] The blame for the problems was sometimes transferred after the fact to society, which "seemed to bungle the job of dealing with these obviously sick men."[42] The notion of a perverted or crazy sex criminal is one of the traditional rape myths,[43] and it seems to have been perpetuated through the 1940s to 1960s in popular magazines. When the articles are taken as a whole, though, the portrait that emerges is one of a fairly average man -- a baker, a grandfather, a high school athlete. One 1953 article even noted that in rape cases, the offender was most likely to be a young married man (45 percent of whom were living with their wives).[44] A 1947 article quoted George W. Henry, an associate professor of psychiatry at Cornell University:

> "Abnormality is found everywhere. No social class no age group, no profession, no community is without it. We have sex variants among college presidents, and business executives, among statemen and legislators.

You cannot mention a single aspect of life that is without them."[45] These few and far-between instances that pointed to the reality of the averageness of the sex offender, instead of creating a monster, indicate that the social reality presented by magazine articles was far from the reality described by crime statistics.

While the vast majority of the discussion about sex offenders dwelt on their harmlessness and lack of self-control, about one-fourth offered more reasonable advice to potential victims. Far from trying to create a false sense of security, some articles cautioned their readers to be wary. These articles appeared with more frequency toward the end of the 1960s. In a *Better Homes & Gardens* article, parents were cautioned that "respectability and pre-eminence in the community are no criteria for judging perversion. A corrupter of children may be anyone."[46] This information was much more realistic, judging from statistics such as those found in a 1950 issue of *Collier's*: "far more women and children [are] murdered by their own husbands, fathers and other near relatives than by unknown 'sex fiends.'"[47] Furthermore, even neighbors, family friends and babysitters could be potential sex offenders.[48] Child molesters were particularly difficult to identify, but *Newsweek* noted that "the immature female is more vulnerable to adult friends ... than to mythical strangers lurking in concealment."[49] These warnings foreshadowed today's statistics.[50]

Only one article actually described the rapist as a vicious criminal who was responsible for his own actions. The first article from the 1965 Kinsey Report, which appeared in *Ladies' Home Journal*, stated that "[t]he true rapist ... is a dangerous, unfeeling man. He regards women as mere objects, and pays little attention to their physical appearance or even age."[51] This message may have been muffled by the fact that the focus of the article was on relaxing the sex crime laws that defined adultery and most statuatory rape as illegal. Although these articles may have

stirred some tension, their messages presented a more accurate picture of the reality of sex crime.

Then again, it is possible to go to far to the cautious end of the spectrum. The Kinsey researchers, who spent most of their time in print sympathizing with the imprisoned sex offenders they interviewed for their 1965 report, certainly must have confused readers with the following assessment:

> "The average man is poised as delicately as a seismograph, ready to respond turbulently to the faintest kind of sexual stimulus; he is quickly aroused by a whiff of perfume, the sight of a neat ankle, a photograph of a movie starlet in a bikini; or just by his own thoughts."[52]

This suggestion that anyone could be a violent rapist definitely had the potential to engender fear. By overgeneralizing, the magazine articles may have contributed to the so-called female fear outlined by Gordon and Riger, who posit that women's fear of being sexually attacked keeps them in a subordinate position in society.[53] Moreover, descriptions of perfume, ankles and bikinis as potential triggers to rape opened the door to placing the blame for a sex crime directly on the victim.

A person receiving a regular diet of these themes might have found it difficult to consider rape and other sex crimes as serious societal problems. The harmless, ineffectual sex criminal -- who could not control his actions and thus his fate -- was more a figure to be pitied and slapped on the wrist than actually punished. Indeed, when recognized sex researchers belittled minor sex crimes such as exhibitionism and voyeurism, they were setting a dangerous precedent for child molesting and rape to be dismissed as well. Only a few of the articles recognized the frequency with minor offenders advance to major crimes. During the 1940s to 1960s, as the forcible rape rate nearly tripled, then, popular magazines virtually ignored the severity of the crime and reduced its impact by turning the public's attention to the sex offender. Again, because sex offenders were not like normal people, they could be

avoided and sex crimes prevented, the magazines implied; anyone who was intelligent enough could remain out of harm's way.

Describing the victims

If the majority of sex offenders were at the mercy of irresistible forces, what of their victims? The articles sampled were less than kind to victims of sex crimes, with most of them following two themes typical of traditional rape myths. The first myth, that victims deserve their misfortune, "is as ancient as the idea of fate itself."[54] Blaming the victim means that he or she did something "bad" to provoke the crime; anyone who is "good" will be immune from sex crimes. A second myth focuses specifically on women: Attractive women entice sex offenders because rape is a sexual crime. This notion obviously ties right into the theme that portrayed sex offenders as under the control of unusual circumstances.

Before examining these themes, it is necessary to consider the types of actual victims listed in the articles sampled. Many of the articles cite examples of sex crime victims to lend a sense of perspective, although occasionally a writer seems to have selected especially sensational crimes for shock value, as in the case of the little girl "snatched on the street, raped, mutilated and slaughtered."[55] One article listed as many as 19 victims, ranging from a raped kindergarten girl to a woman raped in her apartment.[56] In all, 126 victims were cited as examples; 51.5 percent were girls (n=65), 40.5 percent were women (n=51) and 7.9 percent were boys (n=10). Nearly a quarter of the victims were reported killed (23 percent; n=29).

References insinuating that the victim provoked the sex crime -- or even asked for it -- appeared in a number of the sampled articles. Statuatory rape was dismissed in one article because, in 99 of 110 cases, the victim and offender agreed "that the girl had done absolutely nothing to discourage the man."[57] While the same Kinsey

researchers noted in a separate magazine that victims may eventually submit to sex because of fear,[58] the implication that seemed to emerge from the previous statement was that the victim was at fault. When a man was arrested for the rape of a 12-year-old girl, he was acquitted after medical tests showed that she was already sexually experienced.[59] The article did not question the nature of the girl's experience, although it seems probable that she may not have been a willing participant at such a young age. Even more subtle was the reference to a 15-year-old's "teasing" of her attacker -- the girl combed her hair and straightened her skirt; she was later raped and strangled.[60] It seemed that very little action, or lack of it, could excuse some sex crimes.

Other articles were much more blatant in blaming the victims. Women in New York City were raped in their office buildings when they worked late,[61] a statement unusual in that no other article mentioned attacks occurring in the workplace. Because nearly all of the other adult rape victims were described as wives or matrons, this article implied that employed women, especially those who may be ambitious, seemed somehow to deserve their misfortune. Another article described the "foolish" behavior of a 19-year-old girl [*sic*], gang-raped when she accepted a ride home from a party.[62] The article treated the gang-rape of a 14-year-old girl with the same lack of sympathy. Finally, it concluded with the story of another woman, 19, who was gang-raped after she missed her bus. A group of five boys offered her a ride home. The article summed up her victimization this way: "Any girl who got into the car with them was openly offering herself for sexual experience; so the minute she stepped in rape was inevitable."[63]

In some articles, women who were not specifically described as the victims of sex crimes were used to reinforce the notion that rape is sex, and women want it. For instance, tall women who complained of being raped were cautioned that they

would be regardedly suspiciously -- especially if they were bigger than their alleged attackers.[64] A *Time* article told the story of an Italian mayor who lived in an isolated area where rape was a precursor to marriage. This article minced no words in its assumptions about women:

> "Sadly aware of their own drawbacks, the rustic daughters of Ragludi could only sigh and some among them hope that a day would come when handsome, dark-eyed Mayor Pietro Nucera might forget himself and take them by violence."[65]

By themselves, the twin themes of blaming the victim and exonerating the sex offender by insinuating that women want to be victimized may not have been enough to reinforce the traditional rape myths. Combined with the descriptions of pitiful sex offenders, though, the reader of popular magazines of the time was offered a very narrow frame of reference.

And women were not the only victims blamed. Even very young children could be suspect in a molestation, according to the child expert Dr. Spock. In the same manner that the sex offense was twisted to become the fault of an adult, Dr. Spock placed the blame for crimes against children squarely on their little shoulders. "Little girls can be active seducers of young male sitters, as I know from reports, if their mutual roughhousing gets exciting enough," he wrote in *Redbook* as late as 1969.[66] A 1953 university study mentioned that in about two-thirds of child-molestation cases, the children "are often willing victims and repeat the experience."[67] (The article went on to describe such children as insecure, unpopular products of broken homes.) The situation may not have been as simple as the psychiatrists believed, however. In one of the two articles where victims spoke for themselves, a woman recalled her experience at the hands of a neighbor who molested her when she was 12:

> "I began to hate myself bitterly and the man even more; yet a

> combination of forces kept me going back. I prayed that my mother would catch us and bring this nightmare to an end."[68]

It is noteworthy that Dr. Spock frequently referred to child molesting as seduction. This choice of language removed the horror and distastefulness of the crime, replacing it with almost sensual connotations. Suggesting that children could be sexy meant that they could be blamed.

Whereas sex offenders had clinical psychological terms attached to their mental problems, victims were described in the magazines as vaguely disturbed. This differentiation was important because a sex offender might have had a psychological record before the crime, but victims were always "diagnosed" in retrospect. Dr. Spock concluded that "a considerable proportion of the children who are molested or seduced or involved in perverse acts already possess off-kilter personalities."[69] As an example, he cited one case in which a young boy had a "distinctly effeminate disposition" before he was seduced.[70] Generalities served to bolster the notion that victims of sex crimes were unstable, as in this instance from a 1950 *Newsweek* article titled "The Sex Rampage":

> "Many complaints are ... unfounded accusations made by neurotics or by women and children who use them as a cover-up. Police files are full of such cases: Reports of rape from women discovered in infidelities and molestation from children who sought to explain a long absence from home."[71]

Interestingly, then, both sex offenders and their victims were unlike normal people. Sex offenders, however, were harmless and bumbling, but their victims were off-kilter and neurotic. It was this kind of language that led the generation coming of age in the 1940s to '60s to blame the victim and reinforced the stigma attached to sex crimes.

Attractive rape victims faced a different myth. Their looks may have provocated the crime. Indeed, of 10 victims described physically, seven were

"pretty" or "attractive," one was young and "innocent-eyed"[72] and only one was unattractive -- a "heavy, middle-aged" woman.[73] Beyond the writers' assessment of the victims' overall appearances, several included details such as "mini-skirted"[74] or specific descriptions of the victim's looks. An unusual article, written as a plea to the media to withhold the names of rape victims, suggested the reason behind focusing on the victims:

> "Most papers identify all rape victims as either 'graceful' or 'attractive' blondes or brunettes. It is almost as if reporters are trying to find extenuating circumstances for the criminals."[75]

Of the 48 articles sampled for study, only one mentioned that any woman (or any child) was a potential victim. The 1965 Kinsey report, the subject of three articles in two magazines, focused mainly on U.S. sex laws. Toward the end of a *Ladies' Home Journal* article, however, Dr. Paul Gebhard included the following significant sentence: "Certainly any woman who values her life can be raped, no matter how desperately she would like to resist."[76] Perhaps the writers of these sex crimes articles took this statement for granted, but the public was unlikely to recall one sentence weighed against so many stigmatizing the victims.

Women's magazine vs. general interest magazines

Although women's magazines have often been demeaned for their content -- or lack thereof -- they offered a more comprehensive, more accurate discussion of sex crimes during the 1950s and 1960s than the general interest magazines. (No articles on sex crimes appeared in women's magazines before 1953.)

One area in which women's magazines shone was in the dissemination of statistical information. As mentioned above, the forcible rape rate nearly tripled during the period under study, and statistics of other sex crimes in individual cities

that were discussed the articles indicate a similar trend. However, about 80 percent of the general-interest magazines that included information about the number of crimes during the period denied any rise in sex crimes. Not only did the general-interest magazines tend to downplay the growing number of sex crimes, but once the initial shock of particular crime has passed, they used quotes such as the following, perhaps to calm their readers:

> "A sex murder may be more horrible to contemplate than is death by auto, but automobiles kill more than 300 times as many and the victims are just as dead in either case."[77]

Two-thirds of the women's magazines that discussed sex crime rates acknowledged this increase. It should be noted, however, that prior to 1960, women's magazines never mentioned the fact that women could be raped.

Despite the fact that the women's magazines of the era devoted a great deal of their editorial space to beauty tips, they refused to indict rape victims by describing them as attractive. Surprisingly, all of the articles that used adjectives such as "pretty" to portray victims of sex crimes appeared in general-interest magazines. These magazines further sensationalized the crimes by occasionally providing details of the crime:

> "She [a murdered 15-yr-old] was naked except for a jacket, a torn blouse, and a torn brassiere, all pushed up about her shoulders. Her other clothing and her schoolbooks were scattered nearby. A wad of cleansing tissue had been stuffed into her mouth. She had been strangled; her plastic belt was knotted around her neck."[78]

Even as the general interest magazines offered gory details such as the one cited above, though, they were guilty of trivializing most of the sex crimes. The mocking tone of an article about a Woman's Club in Denver that promoted castration for rapists,[79] along with Francesca's story (presented above), served notice that sex crimes were not a serious matter for the majority of the public.

The final difference in coverage between women's and general interest magazines dealt with race. Benedict[80] suggest that interracial rapes receive more press attention than intraracial rapes, which are more common. Perhaps in part because of the racial conflicts of the 1960s, general-interest magazines played up the racial angle, while women's magazines mentioned the race of victim or offender only once. In an interesting comparison, *Newsweek*,*Time* and *Ladies' Home Journal* each printed articles about the same incident. The *Journal* article was written by a black high school teacher who had been accused of fondling a white female student;[81] he wrote that race was a factor in the allegation. The girl had been quoted on several occasions as voicing racial slurs against him. *Newsweek*'s angle was similar to the *Journal*'s.[82] The *Time* article, however, claimed that race did not seem to be involved in the girl's charges.[83] (*Time* also spent several column inches describing the alleged fondling; *Ladies' Home Journal* merely cited the testimony that the teacher had squeezed the student's breasts.) Aside from this case, general-interest magazines noted four other instances of interracial sex crimes, three of which involved black men assaulting white women.[84]

In the area of sex-crime coverage, then, women's magazines do not seem to deserve the criticism they have sometimes received. They did not attempt to sexualize or sensationalize sex crimes, nor did they promote undue fear of men of other races. Granted, the women's magazines of 1950 to 1970 could have presented more accurate depictions of sex offenders and victims. Along with the number of tips they provided to help protect children from sex offenders, they could have included rape-prevention advice for women. Popular magazines of both genres should have devoted more space to the coverage of the era's rising sex-crime rate, but they may have resisted in part because of the sensitive nature of the topic. For general-interest magazines, the sensitive nature did not seem to play a very

substantial role in the scant coverage. These magazines downplayed the impact of rape and other sex crimes, unnecessarily emphasized race, thus tapping an inaccurate stereotype and trivialized women by reducing them to their appearance and/or defining them in terms of their relationships to men.

Conclusion

If magazines function to help their readers create a picture of the world, the readers of the three decades under study found their environment a confusing place. On the one hand, there were mentally ill sex offenders who could not control their urges, but who were, for the most part, basically harmless. On the other, victims of sex crimes were often either unstable and provoked their attacker, or they were attractive and provoked him. The Michigan Governor's Study cited in one of the later articles suggested, "The next generation can have fewer sex offenders if the misinformed and anxiety-ridden attitudes of many adults can be corrected."[65] Ironically, most magazines did little to alleviate the misinformation about sex crimes during this 30-year period.

The scarcity of articles about sex crimes in popular magazines of the 1940s to 1960s hardly reflected the increasing number of forcible rapes and other sexual assaults that occurred during the period. If the media help to tell the public what to think about, these magazines certainly failed to accomplish their duty. Although women's magazines fulfilled their responsibility to heighten awareness of the dangers of sex crimes slightly better than general-interest magazines, both types can be criticized for the narrowness of their coverage. Further, the traditional rape myths they perpetuated may have had a long-lasting effect on society. A generation that was led to believe sex crimes are trivial may have little interest in attempting to solve the problem.

Notes

[1]Janice Winship, *Inside Women's Magazines*, (London: Pandora 1987).

[2]*Newsweek*, "Is this child gay?" Feb. 24, 1992.

[3]David Myers, "The Other Recession," *Knoxville News-Sentinel*, Aug.2, 1992, p. F1.

[4]*Ibid.*

[5]Naomi Wolf, *The Beauty Myth: How Images of Beauty are Used Against Women*, (New York: William Morrow and Company 1991).

[6]Periodicals aimed primarily at the scientific community, such as Science Newsletter, Mental Hygiene and American Scholar, have not been included in these figures. The purpose of this study is to examine the portrayal of sex crimes by popular magazines with broad, general audiences. For the same reason, National Parent Teacher magazine -- a publication for PTA members-- has been omitted from the study. Book reviews are not included because they are reiterations of material found outside of magazines.

[7]U.S. Department of Commerce & U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970, part 1 (Bicentennial Edition)*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office 1975).

[8]Dr. Ignatz Rosenberg and Mildred K. Steffens, "The rape victim," *American Mercury*, October 1951, p. 30.

[9]Gladys Denny Schultz, "Society and the sex criminal," *Readers' Digest*, November 1960, p. 141.

[10]Linda Heath, Margaret T. Gordon and Robert LeBailly, "What Newspapers Tell Us (And Don't Tell Us) About Rape," *Newspaper Research Journal*, 2:48-55 (1981).

[11]Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, (New York: Dell Publishing 1962).

[12]See studies cited in Linda Heath, "Impact of newspaper crime reports on fear of crime: multimethodological investigation," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 47:263-276 (1984).

[13]Jane Caputi, *The Age of Sex Crime*, (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press 1987), p. 12.

[14]Pamela J. Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese, *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content*, (New York: Longman Publishing Group 1991).

[15]*Ladies' Home Journal*, "A shocking story," April 1960, p. 63.

[16]Schultz, *op. cit.*, p. 141.

[17]Deborah Cameron and Elizabeth Frazer, *The Lust to Kill: A Feminist Investigation of Sexual Murder*, (Cambridge: Polity Press1987).

[18]Edith M. Stern, "The Facts on Sex Offenses Against Children," *Parents*, October 1954, p. 42.

[19]Margaret Hickey, ed., "Protecting Children Against Sex Offenders: Omaha, Nebraska,: *Ladies' Home Journal*, April 1957, p. 31; *Newsweek*, "For the Emotionally Ill," Dec. 26, 1955, p. 70; *Newsweek*, "Sex Psychopaths," March 9, 1953, pp. 50-51; Stern, op. cit.; Howard Whitman, "The City

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that DOES Something About Sex Crime," *Collier's*, Jan. 21, 1950, p. 20.

[20]Stern, *op. cit.*

[21]*Ladies' Home Journal*, "A Shocking Story," April 1960, p. 63.

[22]Albert Deutsch, "Sober Facts About Sex Crimes," *Collier's*, Nov. 25, 1960, p. 15; Dr. Paul Gebhard, "The 1965 Kinsey Report: Our Dangerous Sex Lives," *Ladies' Home Journal*, May 1965, p. 66; Stern, *op. cit.*

[23]Dorothy Diamond and Frances Tenenbaum, "To Protect Your Child From Sex Offenders," *Better Homes & Gardens*, May 1953, p. 160; Margaret Hickey, ed., "Public Schools in Abilene, Texas Set Up Roadblocks for Molesters of Children," *Ladies' Home Journal*, June 1960, p. 17.

[24]Diamond and Tenenbaum, *op. cit.*

[25]Margaret Hickey, "Parents and Teachers Can Help," *Ladies' Home Journal*, April 1957, p. 31; Fredric Wertham, "Sex Crimes Can Be Prevented," *Ladies' Home Journal*, August 1961, p. 47.

[26]Stern, *op. cit.*

[27]Gebhard, *op. cit.*; Dr. Paul Gebhard, "The 1965 Kinsey Report, Part II: the Immorality of Our Sex Laws," *Ladies' Home Journal*, June 1965, p. 42; *Newsweek*, "The Sex Offender," Aug. 2, 1965, p. 42.

[28]Cameron and Frazer, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

[29]Deutsch, *op. cit.*

[30]Margaret Hickey, "FBI Reports Sound the Alarm," *Ladies' Home Journal*, April 1960, p. 63.

[31]*Newsweek*, "Uncontrollable Vegetable," Jan.23, 1967, p. 30.

[32]*Newsweek*, "Sex Psychopaths," March 9, 1953, p. 50.

[33]*Newsweek*, "Uncontrollable Vegetable," *op. cit.*

[34]Deutsch, *op. cit.*

[35]*Newsweek*, "Uncontrollable Vegetable," *op. cit.*

[36]*Ladies' Home Journal*, *op. cit.*

[37]Dr. Benjamin Spock, "Can We Protect Children From Molesters?" *Redbook*, November 1969, p. 48.

[38]Gebhard, "Our Dangerous Sex Lives," *op. cit.*, p. 66.

[39]*Ibid.*

[40]Hickey, "FBI Reports," *op. cit.*

[41]Beatrice Schapper, "What we now know about sex offenders," *Today's Health*, January 1960, pp. 78-79.

[42]*Ladies' Home Journal*, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

[43]Helen Benedict, *Victims and Vamps: Sex Crimes in the Press*, Paper Presented at the 1990 AEJMC Convention (August 1990).

[44]*Time*, "Crime in California," March 2, 1953, p. 42.

[45]Howard Whitman, "The biggest taboo," *Colliers*, Feb. 15, 1947, p. 38.

[46]Diamond and Tenenbaum, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

[47]Deutsch, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

[48]Marjorie Holmes, "How to Protect Your Child From Sex Offenders," *Better Homes & Gardens*, January 1959, p. 25.

[49]*Newsweek*, "The Sex Offender," *op. cit.*

[50]French, *op. cit.*

[51]Gebhard, "Our Dangerous Sex Lives," *op. cit.*, p. 121.

[52]Gebhard, "The Immorality," *op. cit.*, p. 42.

[53]Margaret T. Gordon and Stephanie Riger, *The Female Fear*, (New York: The Free Press 1989).

[54]Benedict, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

[55]Deutsch, *op. cit.*

[56]Whitman, *op. cit.*

[57]Gebhard, "The Immorality," *op. cit.*, p. 44.

[58]*Newsweek*, "The Sex Offender," *op. cit.*

[59]Stern, *op. cit.*

[60]John Bartlow Martin, "The True Personal Story of a Youthful Sex Killer," *Look*, Aug. 5, 1958, p. 68.

[61]Wertham, *op. cit.*

[62]Gebhard, "Our Dangerous Sex Lives," *op. cit.*

[63]*Ibid.*, p. 121.

[64]*Ibid.*

[65]*Time*, "The Bashful *Guappo*," July 8, 1958, p. 16.

[66]Spock, *op. cit.*, p. 53.

[67]*Time*, "Crime in California," *op. cit.*

[68]Irma W. Hewlett, "What shall we do about sex offenders?" *Parents*, August 1950, p. 36.

[69]Spock, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

[70]*Ibid.*

[71]*Newsweek*, "The Sex Rampage," Feb. 13, 1950, p. 22.

[72]*Time*, "The Bashful *Guappo*," *op. cit.*

[73]*Newsweek*, "Uncontrollable Vegetable," *op. cit.*

[74]*Ibid.*

[75]Rosenberg and Steffens, *op.cit.*, p. 78.

[76]Gebhard, "Our Dangerous Sex Lives," *op. cit.*, p. 121.

[77]Schapper, *op. cit.*, p. 79.

[78]Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

[79]*Time*, "Homely remedy," Sept. 3, 1951, p. 26.

[80]Benedict, *op. cit.*

[81]Maurice McNeill with Richard Cohen, "How My Town Saved Me From a White Girl's Lie," *Ladies' Home Journal*, March 1968, p. 81.

[82]*Newsweek*, "Drama at Baldwin High," Sept. 18, 1967, pp. 65-66.

[83]*Time*, "A Question of Conduct," Sept. 15, 1967, p. 52.

[84]*Time*, "Where Women Fear to Tread," Aug. 13, 1965, p. 17A; Edgar Labat, "My fourteen years on death row," *Look*, March 19, 1968, pp. 80+.

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Table 1. Magazine articles about sex crimes, 1940 to 1970.

Decade	General-interest Magazines	Women's Magazines	Total
1940s	6	0	6
1950s	26	6	32
1960s	20	9	29
Total	52	15	67

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Magazine Advertorial Advertising: Documenting its Growth and Identifying Characteristics

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ABSTRACT

Advertorial advertising in magazines accounted for over $200 million in magazine advertising revenue in 1990, with this form of marketing communication being labelled "one of the fastest growing media trends in the industry today" (Stout, Wilcox, and Greer 1989). The growth and evolution of advertorial advertising has not, however, been matched with research assessing its current prevalence, impact or effects. The content analysis conducted here thus examined one year's worth of advertising in eight publications representing four magazine editorial categories (news, business, men's, and women's) in order to empirically document advertorial use, differences across magazine genres, and to quantify advertorial characteristics. The results indicated: 1) advertorials account for between about 2 percent and 10 percent of magazine pages, with the percentage dependent on editorial category; 2) business publications appear to be most reliant on advertorial advertising; and 3) single-sponsored advertorials remain the most prevalant type, but multi-sponsored and multipage advertorials are becoming increasingly prominent.

Magazine Advertorial Advertising: Documenting its Growth and Identifying Characteristics

Advertorial advertising in magazines has not reached the level of ubiquity that characterizes most forms of advertising, but considerable evidence suggests it is becoming a familiar and important form of marketing communication. Mostly used by advertisers as a way to stand out in an increasingly cluttered advertising environment, advertorials accounted for over $200 million in magazine advertising revenue in 1990 (Donaton 1992). Originally synomous with advocacy advertising (i.e., primarily issue-oriented messages designed to promote a corporation's beliefs or position on a controversial issue) (Fox 1986; Poe 1980), the definition of advertorial advertising has been expanding since the 1980s to the point where it now includes advertising designed to look like editorial matter as well as advertisements that are coupled with related, advertiser-friendly editorial content (Stout, Wilcox and Greer 1989). Thus, whereas advertorials were primarily single-page advertisements designed to resemble editorial content, today they include special advertising sections in magazines that join several ads with columns or pages of advertiser-friendly editorial text (Barest 1986; Donaton 1992). This evolution, however, has broadened the conceptual definition of advertorials to encompass multiple as well as single advertiser-sponsored or paid-for blocks that combine clearly identifiable advertising with simulated editorial text. A development that has enabled advertorials to adapt to a multitude of editorial environments (Hausknecht, Wilkinson, and Prough 1991) and become "one of the fastest growing media trends in the (advertising) industry today" (Stout et al. 1989).

These developments in magazine advertorial advertising have been documented in several different ways and from many different sources. First, according to the content analysis conducted by Stout et al. (1989), the number of advertorials and advertorial pages both increased over the six-year period of their study. Their sample of eight magazines spanning four separate editorial categories (General Interest, Women's, Men's, and Regional) showed an increase from 8 advertorials in 1980 to 43 in 1986, with the greatest

increase occurring between 1984 and 1985 (i.e., 14 advertorials to 38 advertorials). The number of advertorial pages also increased markedly, from 116 pages in 1980 to 580 in 1985 and 556 in 1986. In both cases, advertorial usage increased most in women's and regional magazines, while men's magazines were consistently least likely to use advertorials. Since 1986, the number of magazine pages devoted to advertorials has increased 51 percent to an estimated 6,998 advertorial pages as tracked by Publishers Information Bureau in 1991 (Donaton 1992). Although this page count was down 5 percent from 1991 (with advertorial revenues showing a similar 4.8 percent decline from 1990 to 1991), advertorial revenue more than doubled from $112 million in 1986 to $229 million in 1991 (Donaton 1992). According to recent estimates, advertorials have become a vital source of advertising revenues, and currently account for between 10 percent and 14 percent of total magazine advertising revenues (Donaton 1992; Hulin-Salkin 1986).

The importance of advertorials is further reflected in the sentiments and beliefs of advertising media planners. In a survey of 1,000 media planners, buyers and advertising directors, Greer, Stout, and Wilcox (1989) found 68 percent had purchased advertorial space for clients, with 72 percent of those ever buying having done so within the past year of the survey (i.e., 1985-1986). Seventy-five percent of the sample said their use of advertorials had increased over the past five years, while only 15 percent reported decreasing their use of advertorials. Overall, a ratio of over two to one was found in favor of having bought advertorial space versus never having bought such space (Greer et al., 1989). According to a more recent industry survey , 81 percent of media sellers, 72 percent of media directors, and 70 percent of advertisers believed advertorials and special advertising sections were useful media vehicles (Lasek 1990).

The evolution and growth of magazine advertorial advertising has not, however, been matched with research assessing the prevalence, impact, or effects of this form of advertising. To date, Stout, Wilcox and Greer's (1989) content analysis of advertorials appearing from 1980 to 1986 and Hausknecht, Wilkinson and Prough's (1991) assessment

of advertorial advertising's effects on college students remain the primary published research examinations. Much concern, however, has been raised regarding magazines' use of, and possible overdependency on, advertorials. For example, advertorials' impact on the "editorial integrity" of magazines has caused some critics of advertorial advertising to call it an "addictive drug for publishers" (Barest 1986; Donaton 1992). As *Leading National Advertisers* data from 1986 showed, among leading national magazines, advertorials have accounted for 5 percent of ***Time Magazine's*** and 8 percent of ***Modern Bride's*** and ***Field and Stream's*** domestic advertising revenues (Stout et al., 1989). Additionally, even as early as 1984, 14 percent of ***Fortune's*** ad pages were filled by advertorials (Elliott, April, 1984). Gloria Steinem (1990) argued that women's magazines are especially guilty of fostering a dependency upon advertisers with the result being publications that are essentially "one giant ad." Although her concerns go beyond advertorials, her analysis of the May 1990 issue of ***Vogue*** magazine revealed that only 38 of the 319 pages were non-advertising or ad-related pages. Prevalence concerns also have raised questions beyond those related to dependency and advertising clutter, including concern over whether advertorials harm advertising credibility (Elliot 1984) and whether advertorials are more likely to deceive consumers than other, more obvious forms of advertising (Hauskenecht, Wilkinson and Prough (1991).

The purpose of this study, therefore, was to update Stout et al.'s study to find out if advertorial use is still increasing, whether differences exist across magazine genres (particularly between men's and women's magazines) and to expand on previous analyses by taking a closer look at the characteristics of recent advertorial advertisements. Not only would this shed insight into current advertorial practices, but further quantifying the characteristics of this form of advertising facilitates research into the effects advertorials have on consumers. At a minimum, an examination of the effects of advertorial advertising, for instance, requires knowledge of the executional features and devices employed by advertorial advertisers. In addition, an assessment of advertorial use across

magazine categories can also lend insight into whether, and how, advertorial advertising differs across magazine genres.

To accomplish these tasks, this paper presents the results of a content analysis of advertorial advertising in eight major consumer magazines. This analysis not only assessed advertorial advertising in four different magazine editorial categories, it specifically examined a number of important issues, including 1) occurrences of advertorial by publication; 2) sponsorship characteristics; and 3) themes used by advertorial advertisers. Prior to explaining the study method, it is helpful to briefly review previous studies and issues involving advertorials to gain a better understanding of advertorials' structural or executional characteristics as well as advertisers' reasons for using advertorials.

Structural Characteristics and Issues

From a publisher's point of view, advertorials were a natural "leap of logic" (Fry 1989). As magazines came under corporate ownership, advertisers felt distanced from publishers. This caused conflicts because advertisers were accustomed to speaking directly with publishers about their concerns. The response of most magazines was to bestow the honorary title of publisher upon the advertising director. However, these "publishers" did not have the power able to influence editorial content or agendas in response to advertisers' requests. So, it was with a leap of logic that these advertising director/"publishers" created an advertising vehicle that would contain editorial information that was pleasing or favorable to advertisers (Fry 1989).

Today, advertorials are prepared in several different ways, but most typically by the advertising sales staffs (Cutler and Muehling 1989; Donaton 1992; Elliot 194; Fry 1989; Greer, Stout and Wilcox 1989; Lasek 1990). Some magazines assign non-editorial staff to the task of designing and writing the section. In other cases, freelance writers who are an authority on the particular topic area or market are hired to create the text (Sobezynski, May, 1982). Advertisers do not usually have input into or control over the text in the themed sections; however, if it is a single-sponsor advertorial, the advertiser prepares the

arrangements. It is also very rare for a magazine's editorial staff to be involved in the creation or writing of an advertorial. In fact, guidelines drafted by the *American Society of Magazine Editors* include stipulations against this practice. ASME guidelines also require that advertorials include a label identifying the editorial copy or special section as advertising (and the word "advertorial" is not to be used for the label), that advertorials employ a distinctly different layout and type from the surrounding editorial matter, and that the sponsor of the advertorial be identified if it is not the magazine. The guidelines further state that the magazine's editorial staff have sufficient time to review the advertorial or advertorial advertising section before publication; primarily to avoid overlap of material or subjects, and so that a respectable balance can be maintained between the size and number of advertorials with the nature and editorial content of the magazine.

In one of the few industry discussions of advertorial use, Sobezynksi (1982) documented a number of publishers' practices regarding advertorial advertising, including:

•McGraw-Hill - ***Business Week*** created a separate department to handle the approximately 25 advertorials it accepted each year. Most of the advertorials were multi-sponsor, themed sections. The advertisers were not granted perusal of the text, which was authored by freelance writers, prior to publication. Each section was labeled "Special Advertising Section" and was set in a different typeface and design.

•Medical Economics Co. (Litton Industries Publishing Group) - Advertorials were inserted into the body of the magazine. They were labeled "Advertisement" as well as printed on a different thickness of paper. Most of the editorial copy was, however, supplied by the advertiser with editorial involvement limited to editing.

•Penton/IPC (published 27 magazines) - Each supplement was negotiated separately and appeared as a special report. The publisher allowed 2-3 advertorial sections per year, but they ranged up to 65 pages in length. The "Advertisement" label was not included on every page.

According to the studies by Stout and her associates (Greet, Stout and Wilcox 1989; Stout , Wilcox and Greer 1989), certain product categories appear to be more prevalent than others when it comes to advertorial use. Computers/electronics, travel/tourism, health and fitness, financial, and fashion-related products were among the product categories that relied most on advertorials. In the content analysis, for example, 75 percent of the advertorial advertising sections were for travel, food/cooking, sports, or

health and fitness products or services. Similarly, the survey of media planners and buyers found travel/tourism, health and fitness, financial services, and electronics/computers the top four advertorial product categories. Although computers did not even make the list in their content analysis, this is likely an artifact of both the time period and the magazines examined (e.g., ***Reader's Digest, Cosmopolitan, Texas Monthly, Southern Living***).

Reasons for Using Advertorials

Empirical judgments of the possible advantageous effects of advertorials have been sparse. Some industry representatives have speculated that increased spending on and use of advertorials are indications of their communication and sales effectiveness (Cutler and Muehling, 1989). According to this view, advertisers would not waste money on ineffective advertising techniques. Unfortunately, such reasoning hardly provides irrefutable evidence regarding the merits of advertorial advertising. There are, however, other, more substantial factors which advertisers use to determine whether advertorials are an appropriate advertising medium. Greer, Stout, and Wilcox (1989) survey, for instance, found the primary reasons for using advertorials included: their compatibility with surrounding editorial content (39%); a belief that they had a greater impact on the readers than traditional magazine ads (31%); their perceived ability to enhance product position (18%); cost efficiency (9%); and client preference (4%). Conversely, the primary disadvantages associated with advertorials were high clutter (25%), lack of editorial integrity (23%), negative reader reactions (18%), high cost (17%), too self-serving or high potential for consumer deception (15%), and overuse (2%). Overall, Greer et al. found media planners and directors believed advertorials generated more, or at least as much recall as regular ads, but were often overpriced.

A review of trade publications shows advertorials are perceived to have additional benefits and drawbacks. On the positive side, many advertisers believe advertorials may experience a longer life as readers pull them as "keepers," while others believe the

additional cost of advertorials pays off in higher readership, inquiry, and reader response levels (Sobezynski 1982). Two additional disadvantages likely arise, however, as use increases. First, continued proliferation may make it increasingly difficult for magazine readers to take the advertorials seriously (Hulin-Salkin, November, 1986). Additionally, the clutter is an especially applicable concern given that surrounding ads in special advertorial advertising sections are most likely from direct competitors. This creates a catalog-type environment that is somewhat like a shopping district. The situation is also counter-intuitive to the normal arrangement of at least a six page separation from competitors (Barest 1986). Present research has not been clear on whether or not these assumptions are well-founded; reiterating the need for an empirical study that quantifies the prevalence of advertorials and the advertisers who use them.

RESEARCH METHOD

To assess the prevalence of advertorials, the advertisers using them, and the variance of advertorial use across magazine categories, a content analysis was conducted using eight different magazines that were published from July 1991 to June 1992. This time frame allowed the most recent year of issues to be studied. The four categories of magazines that were selected for analysis were: News, Business, Women's, and Men's. These categories were chosen because of their representativeness of mainstream publications. The two leading publications in terms of circulation were selected within each of these categories. They were chosen according to classification and circulation information as reported by the ***Standard Rate and Data Service*** (June 27, 1991). Requirements were that the magazine's primary classification fall within the chosen categories and that no duplicated publishers were selected (since some publishing groups advertorial policies as well as their inducements to advertisers are packaged across their magazine titles). This resulted in the following sample:

Publication	Publisher	Circulation	# Issues/Year
News:			
•*Time*	Time, Inc.	4,094,935	52
•*Newsweek*	Newsweek, Inc.	3,211,958	52
Business:			
•*Business Week*	McGraw-Hill	1,020,371	52
•*Forbes*	Forbes, Inc.	744,191	27
Women's:			
•*Family Circle*	Family Circle, Inc.	5,431,779	17
•*Ladies' Home Journal*	Meredith Corporation	5,001,739	12
Men's:			
•*Popular Mechanics*	Hearst Corporation	1,651,064	12
•*Gentlemen's Quarterly*	Conde Nast Publications	637,953	12

Each issue of the above magazines was studied for the year in question. Information on the number of advertorials, themes of special advertorial advertising sections, advertorial layouts, and specific advertorial advertisers was recorded. The total number of magazine pages as well as advertorial pages was tabulated for each issue. Labels, bylines for the advertorial text, and the style and topics of the advertisements were also noted. This data was compiled for each publication and arranged for comparative analysis among publishers and categories.

RESULTS

Advertorial Prevalence

Table 1, which outlines the occurrences of advertorials by publication, shows there are distinct differences clear between magazine categories in terms of advertorial presence. While all eight magazines carried advertorials sometime during the analyzed year, the two

Insert Table 1 about here

business magazines devoted the largest number and greatest percentage of pages to advertorials. In the course of a year, ***Business Week*** devoted about 10 percent of its

pages to advertorials, with the typical advertorial advertising section being 21 pages long. ***Forbes,*** while having much smaller advertorial advertising sections, devoted about 9 percent of its pages to advertorials. For the most part, magazines in the three other editorial categories devoted about 2 percent of their pages to advertorials; with Newsweek, at 4.5 percent, being the sole exception.

Advertorials did appear, however, to have a relatively strong presence in women's magazines. For example, ***Ladies' Home Journal***, was the only publication to include at least one advertorial in each issue, while ***Family Circle*** had the highest average number of advertorials per issue (2.24, with ***Forbes*** averaging the second highest number at 1.96). However, the advertorials in ***Family Circle*** were an average of only 2 pages in length while the ***Forbes*** page average was 9. Table 1 also shows that women's magazines carried more advertorials than men's magazines (i.e., an average of 30 versus 14), but that there was little difference in terms of percentage of pages devoted to advertorials (i.e., around 2 percent) and that no clear patterns emerged regarding average length of advertorial advertising sections.

Finally, when it came to total number of different advertisers, business magazines again topped the list. Over 150 different advertisers used advertorials in ***Business Week*** and ***Forbes***, with many of these advertisers sharing appearances in multipage advertorial sections. In contrast, ***Time*** and ***Popular Mechanics***, while devoting about 2 percent of their pages to advertorials, had 11 or fewer different advertisers. Overall, most of the magazines in the non-business categories contained relatively short advertorial advertising sections with fewer sponsors (with Family Circle's advertorials typically focusing on only one advertiser).

Advertorial Sponsorship

The vast majority of the advertorials examined here were clearly identified as advertising, with the most popular labels being "Special Advertising Section," "Special Advertising Feature," or simply "Advertisement." The few instances in which an

advertorial was not labelled occurred when the advertorial was part of a larger section or feature. As can be seen from the data presented in Table 2, most advertorials had a single sponsor and were very likely the only advertorial to appear in a given issue of the magazine. On the other hand, if the advertorial appeared in a multiple-sponsored special advertising section, it likely appeared with about 7 other advertisers and most likely was

Insert Table 2 about here

published in a business magazine. Although not as prevalent as single-sponsored advertorials, only one publication did not carry a multiple-sponsored advertorial in the course of the year examined (i.e., ***Time Magazine)***. Once again, however, it was the business magazines that were most distinct when it came to advertorials. First, ***Business Week*** and ***Forbes*** had the highest number of multiple-sponsored advertorials (i.e., 20 versus 4 for the next highest category, women's magazines). Second, these multiple-sponsored advertorials had the highest average number of sponsoring advertisers (i.e., about 10, compared to the combined averages of 7.4 for all eight magazines).

Table 2 also shows considerable in-category differences when it came to advertorial sponsorship. In all four categories, one of the two magazines had far more single-sponsored advertorials than the other magazine (e.g., ***Time*** had 29 while ***Newsweek*** had 15). Not surprisingly, those magazines with low single-sponsorship advertorial counts tended to have more multiple-sponsored advertorials than their editorial counterpart (e.g., ***Newsweek*** had 6 multiple-sponsorship while ***Time*** had 0). This suggests that magazines likely have a preference that is fairly strongly adhered to. Overall, however, single-sponsored advertorials were more common for all of the magazines except ***Business Week*** and ***Gentlemen's Quarterly***, the latter of which had an equal number of both types of advertorials. Most of the magazines did not have a dominant advertorial advertiser, although Amway appeared to have established a fairly heavy advertorial presence in the two news magazines. More typically, most advertorial advertisers appeared in one advertorial in a publication during the year examined.

Advertorial Characteristics and Themes

Most of the 222 advertorials examined here were full-page, 4-color layouts, with two-page spreads and smaller ads accounting for about 22 percent. The texts of advertorials and advertorial advertising sections were almost evenly split on whether or not they included author bylines (53 percent did). Most of the bylines were credited to freelance writers who were especially knowledgeable in the field. Several of the advertorial advertising sections began with an introduction from a well-known person such as the U.S. Surgeon General in an attempt to enhance the credibility of the advertorial.

As Table 3 illustrates, ***Business Week*** and ***Forbes*** had the greatest variety of different themes for advertorial sections with 13 and 12 different theme categories, respectively. No theme was common across all eight magazines, but education was a theme that appeared as an advertorial theme in six of the eight magazines, while health/fitness and gifts/shopping appeared in five of the magazines. Thanks in large part to ***Forbes***, "Corporation Spotlights" (i.e., a feature on a particular company or advertiser) was the most frequently occurring advertorial theme (23 occurrences, with 20 in ***Forbes***), followed by advertorials focusing on the environment (21 occurrences). Unlike ***Forbes***, ***Business Week*** advertorials focused primarily on computers and technology and overall captured a wider range of topics and themes. Further, as Table 3 illustrates, advertorial advertising sections were more likely to complement, rather than extend, the editorial direction of a publication. For example, ***Popular Mechanics*** had a number of advertorials featuring cars, trucks, and computers, while ***Gentlemen's Quarterly*** advertorials focused on fashion, clothing, and health/fitness. Similarly, ***Family Circle*** carried ten advertorials for home products, while ***Ladies Home Journal*** carried none. A complete list of all of the theme categories and their popularity can be found in Table 3.

Finally, it should be noted that not all the advertisements in special advertorial advertising sections are tailored to the section theme. Although rare, there were instances in which single-sponsored advertorials did not feature directly related products. For the

most part, though, the unrelated ads were found in multiple-sponsored sections. Fourteen out of the 24 categories did register 100 percent of directly related ads in the advertorials.

DISCUSSION and CONCLUSIONS

The content analysis conducted here showed that advertorial use remains a growing practice among magazine publishers. Compared to Stout et al.'s (1989) examination, advertorial use appears to have grown among general interest magazines. Further, some publications in some editorial categories, particularly business magazines, appear to make far greater use of advertorials than publications in other editorial categories. Although total number of advertorials in women's magazines exceeds that in men's magazines, there is relatively little difference on a percentage of page basis. Thus, unlike Stout et al.'s results, the findings here suggest about 2 percent of the pages in both categories of magazines are, on an annual basis, devoted to advertorial advertising.

Overall, there was considerable similarity as well as significant differences in the ways the magazines assessed, carried and handled advertorial advertising. Assessing the similarities across both editorial categories and magazine titles, one finds: 1) most advertorials exceed one page in length, typically because they are part of special advertorial advertising sections; 2) advertorials are not stylistically different from the advertisements that otherwise appear in the publication; 3) advertorial advertising themes tended to be very topical; and 4) advertorial labelling appeared to be consistently enforced across publications. More importantly, however, advertorial themes and topics generally appear to complement a magazine's editorial content rather than expand its base of advertisers. As Table 3 indicates, most of the advertorials in the publications studied featured products and brands that traditionally utilized the publication as an advertising vehicle rather than adopting the alternative tactic of trying to woo new, non-endemic advertising categories. For example, neither of the women's magazines carried advertorials featuring cars or trucks, nor did ***Gentlemen's Quarterly*** offer advertorials featuring cars/trucks or computers. Rather, as Donaton (1992) suggested, advertorials appear to be offered more

as "value-added" service for existing advertisers than as a new-business development technique.

On the difference side of the ledger, the study results suggest business publications are most reliant on advertorial advertising, and that this reliance appears to be far greater than in other editorial categories. Although the data do not give insight into why ***Forbes*** places such an emphasis on corporate spotlights, it is likely such efforts are related to rewarding loyal advertisers or providing a mechanism for breaking out of advertising clutter. In a similar vein, ***Business Week*** actively solicited advertisers for several of its upcoming special advertorial sections through ads placed within their issues; which may explain their greater advertorial topic diversity and the length of their advertorial advertising sections. Business publications are also unique in that their advertorials have a far greater tendency to include multiple sponsors, to average 10 to 20 pages in length, and to feature the theme material rather than the sponsoring advertisers. Thus, unlike advertorial advertisers in other publication categories, this treatment may decrease the amount of attention any given advertiser receives, thereby reducing its effectiveness as an advertising tactic. In other words, it may be more beneficial to an advertiser to get involved in advertorials in a publication like ***Family Circle*** , where they typically receive exclusive treatment and face little advertorial competition.

The above issue is but one of many message content issues that are in dire need of future research. The analysis conducted here also found the majority of ads within advertorial sections were directly tailored to the theme, but as previously noted, not all advertisers believed it was necessary or beneficial to directly relate their advertising to the advertorial's editorial direction or theme. There was even a case where a single-sponsored advertorial did not incorporate the ad into the theme. Instead, the advertiser in this case, Chrysler, inserted its "regular" car advertisements into an advertorial advertising section focusing on education. This, in turn, suggests future efforts should address questions related to editorial compatibility. For instance, are advertorials more, or less, effective

when they are customized to fit the section's theme? Or should advertisers insert their "regular" advertisements as a means of standing out from the surrounding editorial material? Similarly, most advertorials seem more effective when presented as a complete package with many interrelated parts. However, this can be perceived as grounds for the argument that use of multiple-sponsored advertorials places an advertiser too close to a similar ad from a direct competitor. But, this criticism does not always apply because the themes are often broad in scope leaving much latitude in terms of making the advertisement relevant. As a whole, tailored advertisements are more in keeping with the nature of an advertorial, and are more likely to receive the potential advantages that may result from advertorial use. Future research also needs to examine the relative effectiveness of the different advertorial styles outlined in this study. Is the impact of multiple-sponsored advertorials different from single-sponsored ones? Do longer page lengths in advertorial sections affect the perceived clutter and interest by the reader? In addition to topical themes, do certain characteristics of themes enhance advertorial readership levels?

In sum, this analysis sheds light on the current state of advertorial advertising as well as illustrates its research potential. Many different products are promoted via advertorials, and many publications, especially business magazines, are continuing to demonstrate a willingness to encourage advertorial advertising. A natural consequence is that advertorials deserve much more focused attention in terms of research. Reader interest, advertisement effectiveness, and further analyses of actual advantages and disadvantages of advertorials, including long-term value (or damage) of the approach versus short-term revenue gains should be the next steps in this research area.

Table 1: Advertorial Occurrence by Publication

Publication	# issues analyzed	total # of advertorials in year studied	average # advertorials per issue	average page length of advertorials	% pages devoted to advertorials in issues with them	% pages devoted to advertorials in year studied	total # different advertisers that used advertorials
Time	52	29	0.56	3.10	4.45%	2.13%	8
Newsweek	52	21	0.40	8.33	11.64%	4.45%	57
Business Week	52	31	0.60	21.06	15.83%	9.73%	165
Forbes	27	53	1.96	9.08	8.28%	7.65%	185
Family Circle	17	38	2.24	2.01	3.08%	2.89%	37
Ladies' Home Journal	12	22	1.83	2.14	2.00%	2.00%	38
Popular Mechanics	12	18	1.50	1.51	2.23%	1.69%	11
Gentlemen's Quarterly	12	10	0.83	4.70	1.93%	1.60%	34

Table 2: Sponsorship Data

Publication	# of single-sponsored advertorials in year studied	average # of single-sponsored advertorials per issue	# of multiple-sponsored advertorials in year studied	average # of multiple-sponsored advertorials per issue	average number of sponsors in multiple-sponsored advertorials
Time	29	0.56	0	0	N/A
Newsweek	15	0.29	6	0.12	8.67
Business Week	10	0.19	21	0.40	11.86
Forbes	33	1.22	20	0.74	9.45
Family Circle	34	2.00	4	0.24	9.25
Ladies' Home Journal	18	1.50	4	0.33	7.25
Popular Mechanics	17	1.42	1	0.08	5.0
Gentlemen's Quarterly	5	0.42	5	0.42	7.8

Table 3: Advertorial/Advertorial Ad Section Topics and Themes

Theme	Time	Newsweek	Business Week	Forbes	Family Circle	LHJ	Popular Mechanics	GQ
American/ Patriotism	4 (57%)*		2 (100%)	2 (73%)				
Olympics	4 (100%)	1 (100%)						
Environment	11 (100%)	9 (100%)	1 (80%)					
Medicine	1 (100%)				4 (100%)	7 (100%)		1 (100%)
Cars/Trucks	4 (100%)		2 (100%)				6 (100%)	
Golf and Tennis		2 (100%)	3 (47%)					
Health/Fitness		3 (100%)	2 (85%)	1 (100%)	2 (100%)			4 (66%)
Gifts/Shopping		1 (100%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)	4 (100%)			1 (100%)
Wildlife/ Outdoors		1 (0%)	1 (91%)					
Jobs/ Workforce		1 (100%)	1 (83%)	3 (100%)	1 (100%)			
Business: Global and Regional			4 (89%)	15 (93%)				
Technology/ Computers			8 (100%)	3 (94%)			3 (100%)	
Corporation Spotlights			3 (100%)	20 (100%)				
Travel		2 (76%)	2 (95%)	1 (100%)		1 (93%)		
Personal Investments				2 (100%)				
Alcohol				1 (100%)				
Cosmetics					7 (100%)	4 (100%)		
Home Products					10 (100%)			
Diet/Weight-Loss					5 (100%)	2 (100%)		
Nutrition/ Food					3 (100%)	4 (100%)		
Pets						2 (100%)		
Catalogs/ Merchandising				3 (100%)	1 (100%)		9 (100%)	
Fashion/ Clothing								4 (100%)
Education	5 (0%)	1 (20%)	1 (63%)	1 (100%)	1 (100%)	2 (100%)		
Total # of advertorials	29	21	31	53	38	22	18	10

*percentage of advertisements in the advertorial that are directly tailored to the theme

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Who Pays the Magazine Piper—Consumers or Advertisers?

AEJMC Magazine Division
1993 Convention, Kansas City

by

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Who Pays the Magazine Piper—Consumers or Advertisers?

Introduction and Literature Review

One of the most publicized trends in magazine publishing has been that consumers are paying more and advertisers are paying less. A 1989 *New York Times* article reported that in 1987, "For the first time in the modern history of general interest magazine publishing, revenues from subscriptions and newsstand-copy sales exceeded revenues from advertisers." According to figures quoted from the Magazine Publishers of America, circulation revenue reached $6 billion that year, while advertising revenue totaled only $5.5 billion.[1]

"Circulation is on the verge of becoming the major portion of the equation as ad dollars dwindle," said Patricia Campbell, executive vice president of Times Mirror Magazines at the 1990 American Magazine Conference.[2]

A 1992 article in *Advertising Age* said, "Magazines can trace their meager gains in 1991 to readers willing to meet higher newsstand prices and subscription rates."[3]

This trend has been reported in newspapers, magazines, and even textbooks. Yet it tells only part of the story--and a small and misleading part. An analysis of the data reveals that enormous advertising rate increases have surpassed the inflation rate in recent years, while subscription rate increases have failed to keep pace with inflation.

The purpose of this study is to analyze costs and revenues for circulation and advertising, focusing primarily on 1985-1991 data. It will demonstrate the claim that subscribers are paying most of the bill inaccurately represents the facts. While revenue from subscription sales has increased slightly, the increase is accounted for mainly by an overall circulation increase, not because individual subscribers are paying more.

Few academic studies examine magazine circulation trends and fewer still look at financial aspects of circulation and advertising. Two, however, are notable. Krishnan and Soley examined the relationship between circulation, advertising rates, and costs per thousand (CPMs)* in their 1987 study of 100 major consumer magazines. Among other findings, they discovered a negative correlation between circulation and advertising CPM. The negative correlation showed that the CPM charged by magazine publishers fell as circulation increased. They concluded that the strong negative, non-linear correlation is "consistent with the conclusion that ad rates increase by decreasing marginal amounts when circulation increases."[4]

Hall used historical data from 1938-1960 to trace the rise and fall of the old *Saturday Evening Post*. Using a systems dynamic model, Hall examined complex relationships between subscription rates, advertising CPMs, circulation figures, production costs, and advertising and circulation revenues. He said that one factor that led to the magazine's eventual demise was an increased CPM rate that advertisers were unwilling to pay. For example, between 1951-60 while circulation increased from 4 to 6.3 million, "The real price of advertising rose from an average of $4.61 to $5.74 constant dollars per page per thousand readers and the advertisers purchased fewer pages in the magazine. The best management strategy, therefore, is to maintain a constant CPM. Hall said, "The conclusion is that continually adjusting the advertising rate in order to maintain a constant advertising rate per thousand readers leads to an increasing profit margin and constant revenue and readership growth."[5]

*CPM or cost per thousand is the cost of a full-page ad per 1,000 readers of a magazine. It is determined by dividing the full page ad cost by the number of subscribers and multiplying by 1,000. It is a common way of comparing the relative cost of advertising for small and large-circulation magazines.

Methodology and Sources

The sources for this investigation include data supplied by the Magazine Publishers of America, the Publishers Information Bureau, and the annual *Magazine Trend Reports* published by the Audit Bureau of Circulations. To be included in these reports, a magazine must have an audited paid circulation of at least 100,000 and an annual advertising revenue of at least $1 million. Complete data for the years 1985-1991 was available for 145 ABC-audited magazines, which were included in this analysis.

The Magazine Publishers of America and Publishers Information Bureau provided data on total advertising and circulation revenue. The *Magazine Trend Reports* provided paid circulation figures, black and white and color CPM figures, percentage subscription and single-copy sales, single-copy and one-year subscription price for each of the 145 magazines included in this study.

It should be noted that ABC and Publishers Information Bureau figures represent data from less than 10 percent of more than 2,200 consumer magazines, and in some cases only the top 50 consumer magazines. These figures, therefore, are not necessarily representative or generalizable to all consumer magazines.

While this is primarily a descriptive study, various comparisons were made between these factors using advertising rate as a dependent variable and circulation trends, percentage of single-copy and subscription sales, and single copy and one-year prices as independent variables.

Results

First, Table 1 reveals total circulation and advertising revenue for 1989, 1990, and 1991. It indicates that in 1991, total circulation revenue represented 54 percent of all revenue, while advertising revenue accounted for 52 percent among these 160

magazines. This represents approximately a one percent increase for circulation revenue from the 1989 figure of 53 percent. If there is any statistical verification to the claim that magazine consumers are paying more and advertisers are paying less, then these figures provide it.

TABLE 1

Magazine Advertising and Circulation Revenue 1989-1991

	Sub. Rev.	1-copy Rev. (billions)	Total Circ.	Circ. %	Ad. Rev. (billions)	Ad. Percent
1989	$4.9	$2.5	$7.4	53%	$6.6	47%
1990	$5.0	$2.4	$7.4	52%	$6.8	48%
1991	$5.2	$2.5	$7.7	54%	$6.5	46%

Source: Magazine Publishers of America

What these figures do not reveal is the 50 percent increase in advertising rates that occurred between 1985 and 1991. For the 145 major magazines for which 1985-91 data is available, Table 2 reveals that page rates increased an average of 50 percent while CPM rates increased an average of 40 percent during these years. The average price of a single copy increased from $2.15 to $2.64--a 22.8 percent increase--while the average subscription price increased from $20.39 to $23.66--a 16.0 percent increase.

TABLE 2

Mean Prices for 1985 and 1991
for 145 Consumer Magazines

	B&W Page	Color Page	B&W CPM	Color CPM	1-copy price	1-year price	Circ. (000)
1985	$18875	$25872	$18.97	$26.85	$2.15	$20.39	159,978
1991	28529	38795	26.58	37.33	2.64	23.66	161,370
Increase	51.1%	49.9%	40.1%	39.0%	22.8%	16.0%	0.9%

Source: *Magazine Trend Reports*

The Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index was 107.6 for 1985 and 136.2 for 1991, indicating a 26.7% inflation rate during these same years. That means that page rate increases were almost twice the inflation rate, while single-copy and one-year subscription price increases did not even keep up with inflation. Are consumers paying "more and more" of the bill? These figures suggest not.

What led many to predict doom-and-gloom for advertising revenue was that total ad pages peaked at 177,000 in 1989 and then suffered consecutive declines in 1990 and 1991. Table 3 points out that total ad pages declined 3.0 percent between 1989-90 and a whopping 8.8 percent between 1990-91 before striking back with a 4.4 percent increase in 1992.

TABLE 3

Advertising Revenue and Total Ad Pages 1985-92

Year	revenue (billions)	percent change	total pages	percent change	number of magazines
1985	4.9		152,565		142
1986	5.1	4.1	152,643	.1	147
1987	5.4	5.3	155,636	2.0	146
1988	5.9	10.2	166,717	7.1	156
1989	6.6	11.8	177,007	6.2	166
1990	6.8	1.7	171,689	(3.0)	167
1991	6.5	(3.2)	156,650	(8.8)	164
1992	7.1	9.2	163,513	4.4	173

Source: Publishers Information Bureau

The same table, however, reveals a curious phenomenon. While total pages decreased more than 11 percent between 1989 and 1991, advertising revenue suffered only a net 1.5 percent decline during that same two-year period. And then while pages increased 4.4 percent between 1991 and 1992, revenue increased by more than twice as much 9.2 percent.

This leads to only one conclusion: advertisers are paying more per page. And that is what the data from the 145 ABC-audited magazine has already revealed. Another way of looking at the same information is to divide the 145 magazines into those whose price increases surpassed the inflation rates and those whose prices didn't. Table 4 reveals this information, while Table 5 gives percentage figures for the same data.

TABLE 4

Number of Magazines Whose Price Changes
Surpassed 26.7% inflation rate between 1985-91

	B&W Page	Color Page	B&W CPM	Color CPM	1-copy price	1-year price
> inflation	120	120	114	114	76	50
< inflation	25	25	31	31	69	95
Total	145	145	145	145	145	145

TABLE 5

Percentage of Magazines Whose Price Changes
Surpassed 26.7% inflation rate between 1985-91

	B&W Page	Color Page	B&W CPM	Color CPM	1-copy price	1-year price
> inflation	83	83	79	79	52	34
< inflation	17	17	21	21	48	66
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

This data indicates that 83 percent of these magazines raised advertising rates more than 26.7 percent, while 56 percent raised single-copy prices more than 26.7 percent. Only 39 percent raised their subscription rates more than 26.7 percent.

What are the variables that could have affected which magazines raised prices the

most? Circulation increase or decrease is one. Those magazines that experienced increases in circulation may have raised or lowered rates more than those who lost readers.

Since black and white CPM rate changes and color rate changes generally paralleled each other for each of the 145 magazines in this study, they were combined to form one variable for advertising rate. The 145 magazines were then divided into two groups: Group 1 (> Inflation) increased their advertising CPM more than 26.7 percent while Group 2 (< inflation) increased their advertising CPM less than 26.7 percent.

TABLE 6

Mean percent change in circulation 1985-91 for Group 1 that increased advertising CPM > inflation and Group 2 that increased advertising CPM < inflation

Group 1 (n=116)	5.9%
Group 2 (n=29)	44.2%

Table 6 indicates that the 116 magazines that increased their advertising CPM rates more than 26.7 percent from 1985-91 had an average increase in circulation of only 5.9% for those same years. The 29 magazines that increased their ad rates lessthan 26.7 percent had an average increase in circulation of 44.2 percent.

Another way of looking at the same information is through a cross-tabulation, as displayed in Table 7 on the next page. The table indicates that magazines with circulation decreases were significantly more likely to raise advertising CPM rates more than the inflation level. Fifty-two (52) out of 55 of those magazines that decreased in circulation between 1985-91 raised mean advertising CPM rates more than 26.7 percent.

TABLE 7

The relationship between rate of advertising CPM increase and circulation increase or decrease

	Adv. CPM > inflation	Adv. CPM < inflation	Total
Circ. increase	64	26	90
Circ. decrease	52	3	55
Total	116	29	xx

Chi-square = 11.7
$p < .001$

While circulation increase or decrease is a significant factor affecting the level of advertising CPM increase, another significant factor is percentage of single-copy sales. Table 8 indicates that magazines that increased their advertising rates more than the inflation rate were much more likely to have a high percentage of single-copy or

TABLE 8

Mean percent single-copy sales for Group 1 that increased advertising CPM > inflation and Group 2 that increased advertising CPM < inflation

	Percent single-copy sales
Group 1 (n=116)	20.05%
Group 2 (n=29)	11.44%

t = -3.97
p = <.01

newsstand sales.* A t-value of -3.97 is significant at the p=.01 level. Magazines that did not increase their advertising rates significantly were more likely to have a higher dependence on subscriptions.

Similar comparisons in Table 9 for 1991 total circulation, single-copy price, and subscription price reveal statistically insignificant differences between the two groups.

TABLE 9

1991 circulation, single copy, and subscription price
for Group 1 that increased advertising CPM > inflation and
Group 2 that increased advertising CPM < inflation

	1991 Circulation	1-copy price	1-year price
Group 1 (> inflation)	1,754,204	2.69	23.43
Group 2 (< inflation)	1,157,296	2.38	24.58

Discussion

Although circulation revenue is higher than advertising revenue, that situation won't last forever if current trends continue. Between 1985-91, advertising rates increased at three times the rate of subscription price increases. Inflation increased at an average annual rate of 4.5 percent, subscription prices increased at an average annual rate of 2.7 percent, and per page advertising prices increased at an average annual rate of 8.3 percent. The CPM rate, which accounts for increases caused by circulation increases , also increased at an average annual rate of 6.7 percent.

*The term "newsstand sales" and "single-copy sales" are considered synonymous, although "single-copy sales" is the more modern and preferred term.

The fact that magazines are charging advertisers more and getting it speaks well of the value that advertisers place on magazine readers. The past year of 1992 was a healthy one for the magazine industry with 80 percent of the top 100 consumer magazines experiencing an increase in advertising revenue, according to *Advertising Age*.[6] Magazine share of the total advertising dollar increased in 1992 at the expense of television, newspapers, and radio. Magazine ad revenues improved more than eight percent, while other media experienced a three percent rise over 1991.[7]

At the same time, one cannot help but suspect that magazine publishers are singing the "consumers are paying more" song in order to convince the advertisers to accept these higher rates. John M. Thorton, circulation director of *Forbes*, was quoted in a *New York Times* article as saying: "We have always thought that the fact that a subscriber pays a fair share of the cost for the magazine helps us sell an advertiser on the idea that he wants it and is reading it."[8] It's a nice message and it does help sell advertisements.

Previously cited research indicates that CPM rates that increase at a higher rate than the consumer price index (or inflation) set a dangerous trend. As Hall discovered with the *Saturday Evening Post*, higher CPMs could lead to fewer advertisers, which could lead to smaller magazines and poorer editorial quality, which could lead to fewer subscribers, which could lead to fewer advertisers--and so forth. As Hall said of the *Saturday Evening Post* of the 1950s, "The real price of advertising rose from an average of $4.61 to $5.74 constant dollars per page per thousand readers and the advertisers purchased fewer pages in the magazine."[9] The findings of this study could indicate the beginning of a downward spiral for some magazines, although the empirical evidence doesn't suggest that is happening yet.

Both research articles that were cited in the literature review (Krishnan and Soley; Hall) discovered a negative relationship between circulation and costs-per-thousand for periods of steady or increasing circulation. They discovered that as circulation size increased, the CPM decreased. This study revealed that magazines with circulation decreases were significantly more likely than those with circulation increases to raise advertising CPM rates more than 26. 7 percent. That indicates that these magazines with a declining number of readers are turning to advertisers as a way to make up for lost circulation revenue. By contravening widely accepted practices in the magazine industry, these magazines are running a dangerous risk of endangering advertisers, revenues, and ultimately their own existence.

A second major finding is worthy of comment. Although single-copy (newsstand)* sales have been declining in recent years, these readers remain an important target audience for advertisers. newsstand sales are a critical indication to advertisers of how much consumers value a publication. "The theory is that readers who travel to a newsstand and pay full price are far more interested than those who get a magazine in the mail," said Kim Foltz in a *New York Times* article.[10] However, Krishnan and Soley had a contradictory finding in their *Journal of Advertising Research* article. They said: "As marginal readers, newsstand buyers have less interest in the magazine's editorial and advertising content. This makes the newsstand buyer less attractive to advertisers, pushing downward the magazine's advertising rate."[11]

The data from this investigation supports the *New York Times* theory. It indicates magazines that increased their advertising CPM more than 26.7 percent in the six year period had an average single-copy sales percentage of 20 percent. Those that increased

advertising rates less than 26.7 percent had a single-copy sales percentage of 11.5 percent, which was a statistically significant difference. It appears that magazines with a higher percentage of newsstand sales are more likely to significantly raise their advertising rates.

An obvious factor that begs for comment is the widespread industry practice of discounting advertising rates and selling for less—sometimes considerably less—than the rate card price. That fact in itself would obviate the ostensibly high price increases documented in this study. On the other hand, the number of magazines engaging in this practice, or the extent to which prices are cut, is impossible to document.

The past six years have been turbulent and cyclical ones for the magazine industry. It rushed through the booming eighties into the slumping nineties only to encounter a somewhat surprising upswing in 1992. It would be premature, if not dangerous, to base long-term theory on these six-year findings. The jury is still out. But one answer is clear: it's too soon to say that consumers have a long-term contract to pay the piper. As long as advertisers are doling out the dollars, then consumers will enjoy the music as long as possible.

NOTES

[1]Albert Scardino, "Magazines Raise Reliance on Circulation," *New York Times* (8 May 1989): D11.

[2]Scott Donaton, "Circulation is Key Issues for '90s," *Advertising Age* (15 October 1990): 16.

[3]R. Craig Endicott, "Ad Age 300: Ad Age Ranks the Nation's Largest Magazines," *Advertising Age* (15 June 1992):S-1.

[4]R. Krishnan and Lawrence Soley, "Controlling Magazine Circulation," *Journal of Advertising Research* (August/September 1987): 17-23.

[5]Roger I. Hall, "A System Pathology of an Organization: The Rise and Fall of the Old Saturday Evening Post," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 21 (June 1976):185-210.

[6]"Magazine Ad Page Leaders" *Advertising Age* (19 Oct. 1992):

[7]Marc Boisclair, "Finally, a Little Sunshine," *Magazine Week* (2 November 1992): 24-27.

[8]Scardino, "Magazines Raise Reliance on Circulation," p. D11.

[9]Hall, "A System Pathology of an Organization," 201.

[10]Kim Foltz, "New Tactics by Magazine Publishers," (28 August 1990): D17.

[11]Krishnan and Soley, "Controlling Magazine Circulation," 22.

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